

No. LXII.

FRENCH'S STANDARD DRAMA.

OLD HEADS & YOUNG HEARTS

A Play,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY DION BOURCICAULT.

WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, CAST OF CHARACTERS, COSTUMES, RELATIVE POSITIONS, ETC.

NEW YORK

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PUBLISHER

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CAST OF CHARACTERS.

	<i>Haymarket, 1844.</i>	<i>Walnut st., Phil., 1847.</i>	<i>Broadway, 1848</i>
<i>Earl of Pompion ...</i>	Mr. Tilbury	Mr. A'Becket	Mr. D. C. Anderson
<i>Lord Koebuck</i>	" H. Holl	" Smith	" Dawson
<i>Colonel Rocket</i>	" Strickland	" Spear	" Vaché
<i>Littleton Ooke</i>	" C. Mathews	" Wheatly	" Lester
<i>Tom Coke.....</i>	" Webster	" Richings	" Fleming
<i>Jesse Rural.....</i>	" W. Farren	" R. Blake	" R. Blake
<i>Bob</i>	" Buckstone	" Chapman	" Hadaway
<i>Stripe.....</i>	" T. F. Mathews	" Eberle	" G. Chapman
<i>Russell.....</i>	" Carle	" Huckurt	" Gallot
<i>Countess of Pompion</i>	Mrs. W. Clifford	Mrs. Blake	Mrs. Winstanley
<i>Lady Alice.....</i>	Madame Vestris	Miss S. Cushman	Miss Wallack
<i>Miss Rocket.....</i>	Miss Julia Bennett	Mrs. Rogers	Mrs. Sergeant

COSTUMES.

The Costumes are those of the present day.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.

R. means Right; L. Left; R. D. Right Door; L. D. Left Door, S. E. Second Entrance; U. E. Upper Entrance; M. D. Middle Door

RELATIVE POSITIONS.

R., means Right; L., Left; C., Centre; R. C., Right of Centre, L. C., Left of Centre.

Passages marked with Inverted Commas are usually omitted in the Representation.

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION.

BORCICAULT may be considered to be the originator of what has been very aptly designated as the "*Upholstery School of COMEDY*," in which the decorations and novel effects derivable from the appointments and accessories, which modern improvement has introduced on the stage, form the prominent features of the piece. That the comedies of this author owe much of their success to these novel introductions, cannot be denied, but Borçicault also possesses the talent of infusing into his compositions a sparkling vivacity of dialogue, a neatness in the construction of his plot, a knowledge of character, drawn from a close observance of the follies and vices of our period, and a happy skill in the management of his incidents and situations; and by these united qualifications, he has succeeded in producing two or three comedies, that never fail to amuse and attract audiences, aided as they are by the adornments of costly stage appointments.

The chief defect, we consider, in all Borçicault's productions, is the utter heartlessness that pervade his pictures of modern manners. His epigrammatic wit, and his polished keenness of satire, seem to revel in representing the most selfish characteristics of modern fashionable society. The exclusiveness of this society, perhaps, exposes it to the censure of the satirist; and the Dramatic writer, whose province it is to "shoot folly as it flies," may be pardoned if he faithfully represents the classes, from which he draws the originals of his fictitious creations. He may draw from these equivocal fountains large draughts of wit and humour, and he may excite the risibilities of his audiences with displays of his peculiar genius: but we humbly conceive that the brightest flashes of his wit, will be wanting in that other essential element of true Dramatic wit—Poetry, while the moral influence of such exhibitions of real life, in a Dramatic form, is deleterious in its effects on an audience. We are not so visionary in our theories as to look to the stage for any high code of morals, although we believe such might be its legitimate province; yet we contend that the stage is a school where a pure and correct taste may be cultivated; and

we hold it to be a perversion of good taste, to present life as being one unbroken link of heartless frivolity and polished insincerity, as Borçicault delights in picturing it. Nor can we admit the fidelity of his portraits of character, amusing as we confess they are in the representation. They seem rather to owe their existence to the exaggerated delineations with which modern fiction abounds; the characters are, in fact, copies from fashionable novels, and not transcripts from nature. The stage has lost its original influence over the intellectual and the fashionable classes, so that its power for good or evil has become nearly extinct. The mass of play-goers view the entertainment derivable from the theatre as a mere amusement, a relaxation from daily toil, and prescribed duty; and the author that can most effectually interest, amuse, or excite an audience for the passing hour, becomes the popular idol of the day. We have no desire to impeach the taste of the public, but we do object to men of genius fostering the frivolous spirit of the age, and, what is more reprehensible, disseminating through the powerful instrumentality of the Drama, a false code of morals, calculated to undermine all the social virtues of life.

We look upon "Old Heads and Young Hearts" to be the most open to censure, of any of Borçicault's productions. The leading characters are nearly all of them high drawn satires on humanity. *Littleton Coke* is a mere *blasé* man of fashion, a spendthrift, a sneerer, and a scoffer; even his love for *Lady Alice Hawthorne* is but a compound of selfishness and cupidity; and her witty ladyship is but a slight remove from a heartless and frivolous coquette.

The British Peerage, we trust, could never have furnished the prototypes of *Lord* and *Lady Pompion*; and *Col. Rocket* is too ignorant and too coarse to be considered as even slightly to resemble any officer of rank, that was ever gazetted in the army list. *Lord Roebuck* is an inanity, save in his disregard of filial duty; on this point he bears the infallible brand of the author. *Miss Rocket* is a fitting counterpart of her lover, and *Bob* is the stereotyped lying, impudent valet of the stage, with all the heartlessness and selfishness of his master, which he wears as he does the second-hand clothes that become his perquisites. Apart from this group stand out *Tom Coke* and *Jesse Rural*; they are intrusted with the sentiment of the comedy, or, rather, they are the author's exponents of the morality of the piece. *Tom* is made a sort of untutored country boor, is crossed in his affections, and jeered at by his fashionable spendthrift of a brother; and *Rural* is a simple-hearted aged clergyman, on whom all the plots

and counterplots of the comedy is made to revolve; he is limited and ridiculed through five acts for the amusement of the audience, and is at last driven almost to madness, to heighten the effect of the final climax.

Such a clergyman as *Jesse Rural* is depicted, should never have been selected for exhibition on the stage, under the degrading circumstances Borçicault has thought fit to introduce him.

But with all these exceptionable points in this comedy, it is popular as an acting play. The language is sprightly, witty, and pointed, the incidents are highly dramatic, and the constant succession of equivoque keep interest alive from the rising to the falling of the curtain.

“Old Heads and Young Hearts” has been peculiarly successful in this country, chiefly from the admirable personation of *Jesse Rural* by Mr. W. R. BLAKE, the present manager of the Broadway Theatre. This gentleman had acquired a wide-spread celebrity in Philadelphia and Baltimore, for his inimitable performance of the part; and on his assuming the stage management of the Broadway, the comedy was revived with every attention to its details, and had a continuous run of sixteen nights, to crowded and delighted audiences.

Mr. Blake’s embodiment of *Jesse Rural*, may be classed among the finest histrionic efforts now extant upon the stage. It is, indeed, one of those truthful pieces of acting, in which the artist is almost identified with the character he represents. We cannot conceive anything more true to nature, both in appearance and acting, than is the personation of this character in the hands of Mr. Blake



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OLD HEADS AND YOUNG HEARTS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Temple. The Interior of Littleton Coke's Chambers, meagrely furnished. COKE is discovered at breakfast, reading the paper. BOB, cleaning a Meer-schaum, R.*

Lit. [*Reads.*] Express from China—um—um—police—um—fashionable arrivals. Ha!—at Mivart's, Lord Charles Roebuck, from Paris—my schoolfellow and college chum—perhaps he has written to me—Bob!

Bob. Sir.

Lit. Any papers for me this morning?

Bob. Yes, sir; one for the income tax.

Lit. Do we pay that, Bob?

Bob. No, sir, I wish we did.

Lit. (L.) [*Rising, and coming forward.*] How comes it, that during five years' hard labour at the bar, I never have had any thing to do?

Bob. Yes, sir; law is quite as unprofitable to us now, as it would be to our clients, if we had any.

Lit. Have I not angled daily in Westminster Hall?

Bob. While I carried after you a red bag, fat with you unpaid bills, like a landing net.

Lit. Without a nibble.—[*Half apart.*] I could almost repent that nature had not left me in the insignificance of my birth. What right had the son of a hard-working Yorkshire coal-owner to flaunt it at Eton and Oxford, and all because my mother, before my birth, dreamed of a woolsack, and so would call me Littleton—and yet, while my suppers and stables were declared unique—when tufted lordlings exchanged Christian names with me—I thought—ha!—I see my error—mistook my mo-

ney for myself—why was I given so keen a sense for enjoyment, and so limited a power of gratifying it?

Bob. But your father, at his death, sir, left you 700*l.* a-year.

Lit. To support 7000 appetites he bequeathed me at my birth; so, unfortunately, through life my wants have ever exceeded my means.

Bob. Ah, sir, but wants are the servants of genius.

Lit. Say its masters, rather.

Bob. Your brother in Yorkshire is rich.

Lit. Thanks to my extravagance that made him so; I have mortgaged every acre of my land to him.

Bob. If you were to write to him, sir.

Lit. I have done so; [*Postman's knock, L.*] there's the answer. [*Exit, Bob, L.*] It was my last resource.

Re-enter BOB, L.

Bob. [*Weighing the letter.*] It feels promising, sir.

Lit. [*Opens and reads.*] “*Dear brother Littleton—Your favour of the 21st ultimo has duly come to hand—am most happy to find you have not forgot Sykes Hall, and those in it. Tabby sends her love, and the Rev. Mr. Rural his blessing—the collieries win fairly—corn is at 50*s.* and mutton is looking up; and I am your affectionate brother,*

“THOMAS COKE.”

Bob. Lord, sir!

Lit. “*Postscript.—As to your debts, I can neither afford to give champagne suppers to your friends, nor pay for the spavined horses they have to sell you; had you moderated your vanity in the entertainment of a pack of spunging spendthrifts, you had not now to stoop your pride to a set of honest tradesmen.*” [*Tears up the letter.*] I deserved it: let him keep his gold.

Bob. They say he is generous enough on occasion.

Lit. Oh, yes! [*Bitterly.*] Builds charity schools and endows lying-in hospitals, while his own flesh and blood may rot in a jail! Curse his generosity! his is all newspaper charity and mouth virtue. Yes, I will apply to my friend: Bob, did you take that note to Lord St. James?

Bob. Yes, sir; I found him at Mr. Deuceace's.

Lit. [*Half apart.*] It was but for 20*l.* Well, where is his answer?

Bob. He sent down his compliments, that he was gone to Florence.

Lit. The paltry—here's a fellow, now, who used to swallow my dinners and jokes in sunny times, to take away at the first post.

Bob. Yes, sir, swallows always were summer birds.

Lit. No impertinence! [*A double knock, L.*]

Bob. [*Chopfallen.*] Are you at home, sir?

Lit. Yes. [*Exit Bob, L.*] Home! mine is a sarcasm on the word.

Re-enter BOB, L.

Bob. Lord Charles Roebuck, sir. [*Bob retires up, L.*]

Enter LORD CHARLES ROEBUCK, L. and crosses to C.

Lit. Charles, my dear fellow. [*Shaking his hand.*]

Roe. The same as ever—I can almost believe myself at college again—and Bob, too—

Bob. Yes, my lord, promoted from gyp to lawyer's clerk.

Roe. It seems but a month ago since I roasted you for courting my bed-maker—do you remember?

Bob. Remember! your lordship tied me along a form before the fire, went out, and forgot me.

Roe. You found that night's roasting a cure for love, eh? Well, I'll remember you this time: there is a plaster for your [*Gives him a note,*] sore memory—vanish!

Bob. Never mind, you may want me again if you like
[*Looks at money—exit, L.*]

Lit. Why, your long residence in Paris has transmuted you from a model for young England, into the type of *jeune France*. Some time since we parted at Alina Mater.

Roe. Three years; I started immediately for Paris, where my brother was ambassador plenipotentiary; my father wished me to graduate in diplomacy under his able *surveillance*.

Lit. And your respected sire, the Home Secretary?

Roe. I have not seen the Earl since my return.

Lit. How?

Roe. No! to be candid with you, I'm in a scrape, so I naturally hastened to you.

Lit. I have, at your service, a stock of advice, generously subscribed by my friends when I revealed to them the bottom of my purse—proceed.

Roe. The most ancient of maladies.

Lit. Oh, love?

Roe. To distraction.

Lit. How? vulgarly, with a woman—or fashionably, with yourself?

Roe. Listen and judge. Ten days ago, as, in obedience to my father's mandate, I was on my route from Paris—my chariot was arrested on the Dover Road, by a spill illustrated with oaths and screams.

Lit. Heroics—by Jove!

Roe. Post-boy whipping—horses kicking—old gentlemen cursing—young lady screaming and fainting alternately.

Lit. Lucky dog!

Roe. I disengaged the senseless fair, threw off her bonnet, and unveiled a face—oh, Coke, such a face! she gasped for breath.

Lit. You lent her some of yours?

Roe. I did—but she relapsed again.

Lit. Naturally—so you kept her alive by repeated application?

Roe. 'Till her father came up.

Lit. She recovered, then?

Roe. Immediately—he thanked me, tucked my angel under his arm, they re-entered the righted vehicle, and drove on.

Lit. Is that all?

Roe. Forbid it, Venus—no—with incredible trouble I traced them. The father—the dragon who guards this Hesperian fruit, is an old East-Indian Colonel, as proud as Lucifer, and as hot as his dominions—I hovered round the house for a week.

Lit. Successfully?

Roe. I saw her once for a second at the back garden gate.

Lit. To speak to her?

Roe. 'T hadn't time.

Lit. No?—Oh!

Roe. No. So I gave her a kiss—

Lit. Excellent economy! and her name—

Roe. Is Rocket—her father, an eccentric old bully, turns his house into a barrack—mounts guard at the hall-door—the poor girl can't move without a sentry, and I believe her lady's maid is an old one-eyed corporal of artillery.

Lit. Is she rich?

Roe. She is fair.

Lit. Possibly—a thing to be admired in a *danscuse* or a friend's wife; but in the matrimonial stocks, done on our Western 'change, the fairest hue we recognise is yellow

Roe. Does virtue go for nothing?

Lit. Oh! no; character is indispensable to servant maids, but virtue, as a word, is obsolete; we have, indeed, a French one like it, *vertu*, yes—ladies of *vertu* might signify articles of rarity.

Roe. Does the lexicon of fashion, then, abjure the sense?

Lit. Certainly not; virtue signifies the strength in a bottle of salts.

Roe. And vice!

Lit. A—a fault in horses.

Roe. And religion?

Lit. A pew in a fashionable church!

Roe. So 'twould appear that beauty is invested in bank stock; grace consolidated with the landed interests; while reputation fluctuates with the three and a half per cents.

Lit. Exactly; gold is the Medean bath of youth, possessing also a magnetic attraction for every cardinal virtue, while all the plagues of Egypt are shut up in one English word, and that is *poverty*; the exhibition of which, like that of the Gorgon's head, turns the hearts of your dearest friends to stone.

Roe. Can May Fair legislation so repeal the laws of nature? by Jove! the West end at last will cut the sun because it rises in the east, and live by wax light

Lit. You, perhaps, may never see the world as I do, Charles, because I am poor; but a rich man's view of life is bounded by his parasites—he feels but through his glove, and thinks all things are soft.

Roe. Then I am lost, for my angel is pennyless.

Lit. Right, angels are the only things who can be poor and lovely; but to marry thus before you have given the worshipful company of mamma brokers a chance, is against all rule.

Roe. Would you have me marry a thing whose mind is bounded by her bonnet, a soul perfumed with foreign sentiment—as guiltless of old English virtues as her tongue is of their native names. No! I'll have a heart that beats with blood—a cheek that's red with it—and be no slave of such a thing of scent and paint—but strike one blow for love and human nature.

Lit. Oh, you luxurious dog! [*Shaking his hand.*] Oh --h! if I could only afford to marry a woman instead of a banker's account—but what obstacles oppose your epicurean intentions towards Miss Rocket?

Roe. I hear my father intends for me the double honour of a seat in the house, and a wife—my cousin, Alice, the wealthy young widow of Lord George Hawthorn.

Lit. Lady Alice—who shook the very apathy of the opera last week, by demanding to be balloted into the omnibus box!

Roe. Such a wife—why do they not give her a commission in the blues, at once?

Lit. She flashed into our fashionable system like a new comet, whose eccentricity defied all known law, and quickly drew after her a train that obliterated all the constellations of St. James's, and the heavenly bodies of May fair.

Roe. You know her, then?

Lit. A Polka acquaintanceship! I've been introduced to her waist;—we know each other in the house of our mutual friends—but of what use can I be here?

Roe. The greatest. My father has arranged my nomination for Closeborough, I shall be obliged to advocate his political principles in the house, to which party old Rocket is a virulent opponent.

Lit. What's to be done?

Roe. Oppose my father—and thus—oblige me by opposing my election, and I will answer for your success.

Lit. Ha! ha! help me to your borough—why, you rascal, would you make the Home Secretary purchase a talented member for the opposition?

“*Roe*. Consent.”

Lit. With all my heart; I see but one obstacle—the qualification!

Roe The three hundred a-year—that’s true—stay—Coke, at Eton, you were considered a fellow of great pluck.

Lit. You flatter.

Roe. You look tenacious of life.

Lit. Ha!

Roe. I’ll make you a present of the widow.

Lit. Lady Alice?

Roe. If she have not, ere this, volunteered to Morocco or Macao.

Lit. Charles, to oblige you I accept the borough—for your sake I’ll encounter the widow and the five thousand a-year.

Bob rushes in, L.

Bob. Sir—sir—they are come—

Lit. They—who?

Bob. Two of the fattest clients, sir, you ever saw.

Lit. Clients—you are mad, or a fool.

Bob. Neither, sir—but I think they are both.

Lit. Stay—come here. *Bob*—[*Bob crosses to Littleton,*] what are they like?

Bob. One, sir, is a very respectable old gentleman in black, white hair—

Lit. Scriven, the attorney and money lender. The other?

Bob. A responsible—sort of—sporting character.

Lit. Craft, the bailiff—I’m ruined! [*Crosses to L.*

Roe. What’s the debt? perhaps I—

Lit. No, Charles—to be honest with you—my hopes are too slender to bear an obligation. I’m as low in pride, now, as I am in pocket, and cannot afford to turn a friend into a creditor.

Bob. They are just on this landing, sir.

Roe. Come with me. I can offer you a room at my father’s ’till your election is over.

Bob. Step inside, sir; while they come in, you can go out by the other door.

Lit. Farewell, fond visions of the woolsack: *Bob*, give up my chattels, let them take possession.

Bob. All right, sir; a table, two chairs, a bed, and a boot-jack. [*Exeunt at the back, c., followed by Bob. After a pause, knocking is heard, L.*

Enter RURAL, L.

Rur. Littleton! Littleton! Litt—eh!—bless me, nobody! Tom, come in.

Enter TOM COKE, L.

Tom. I'm here, minister; so these be brother Littleton's chambers—well, they don't look prodigal, neither.

Rur. No, no, but where is he?

Tom. And they ca' this the Temple, eh? It'll be moire loike a coil hoile aboove ground than owt else a knaw; well, minister, you would coome up to town wi' me; here we are—what next?

Rur. My dear boy, I know that you feel an old man like me a burthen on you—now you are a great man, a member of parliament.

Tom. That's onkind of you, minister, and you're not given to say cruel things; why, isn't your face the very first thing in the world I can remember? haven't you been a father to us since we were left orphans? a burthen! that's the hardest word you spoke since you taught us catechesm wi' brother Littleton sitting on one knee and I on t'oother.

Rur. Think of that, Tom, do; and to see you united again is my prayer.

Tom. But wha couldn't yaw wait until we had set down quietly in the Earl of Pompion's house, according to his invitation? 'Twas main kind of him, minister; he's the Home Secretary, and the next post after I was made member o' Parliament, brought me a hearty invitation to his house: that's hospitality.

Rur. But where is Littleton?

Tom. I'll tell ye:—in bed, sleeping off his last night's debauch, or wi' flushed and haggard cheek, still leaving over the gambling table.

NOTE.—The language used by Tom Coke is written in a broad dialect, to distinguish the character, but should be acted with an accent only; and in Provincial Theatres, should be given to the gentleman performing Yorkshiremen, but to the eccentric comedian.

Rur. No, Tom, no! my little pupil, my child! a gambler!—no! he was wild, sensitive, but you know he was never—

Tom. I know no more than this—I remember him, the rapture of my poor mother, the hope of my father—and you, you always loved him best.

Rur. Tom, Tom, don't reproach me!

Tom. Reproach! nay, not so—Nature gave him a great mind, me only an honest one. He was born for greater things than I, and so he had all that wealth could lavish on him—I didn't grudge it him—he fed from the silver plate, I from the wooden platter—I cared naaw't for that, but at his grand school, why did he find the houses of my lord this, and marquis that, more welcome than his own home? I don't reproach, mind—but—but when our mother died I stood alone by her—and her last breath prayed for him. I wasn't jealous, minister; but in my father's will, the part that gave me my inheritance was writ in the hard hand of a lawyer's clerk, while the gift to Littleton, with a blessing, was penned by the trembling fingers of my father, and blotted wi' his tears. I've tried to hate him.

Rur. Tom!

Tom. I did, but I couldn't. The same strange love you all showed for him, I shared wi' you—a'most against ma will—and when those short heartless letters would come, containing nowt but calls for money—money—money—I could ha' freely *given* ten times what I *lent*, for but four words of heart's blood in 'em, if 'twor but “God bless ye, Tom.”

Rur. And he will say so when he sees you—he will.—Think what a dear child he was—so clinging, affectionate, innocent.

[*Spoken very affectionately.*

Tom. Ye forget, that was fifteen years ago.

Rur. Was it?—bless me—so it was—but you remember how generous, and kind, and wild he was—how I doted on the trouble he used to give me; and how clever—quite overpowered my faculties. I could never teach him anything but cat's cradle.

Re-enter BOB, C. D. F.

Oh, here is his servant.

[*Bob advances, whistling, and sits on the table L.*

Tom. Where be thy measter, lad?

Bob. Beyond your clutches, vampire. Oh, you may stare!

Tom. What dost mean?

Bob. Why, that the paltry debt I suppose you come to sue for, will be paid.

Tom. My debt? he knows me, then?

Bob. Unhappily, he does.

Tom. Is this his welcome when a come to tak him by the hand?

Bob. By the collar, you mean—oh, there, seize—seize—your sort don't refuse even two-pence in the pound.

Tom. This is too much. [*Attempts to get at Bob.*]

Rur. Stop, don't be rash! let me see the boy. [*Crosses to c., and puts on his spectacles.*] My good boy, I'm sure you will tell me where your master is.

[*Looking Bob in the face affectionately.*]

Bob. Oh, you precious old rascal!

Rur. Good gracious! [*Rural starts.*]

Bob. Arn't you ashamed of yourself?

Tom. Let me at him.

Rur. [*Holding Tom.*] No! no! Tom, I insist.

Bob. I say it again—you *are* vampires, leeches, and, though I am nothing but a poor servant, before I would do a day's work like this, I'd see all the gains your trade has ever wrenched from misery sunk to the bottom of the sea—ach!

[*Exit, slamming the door, L.*]

Tom. Well, minister, ar't satisfied now?

Rur. He never could intend—

Tom. Intend—didn't he know us—he spoke of my debt—oh, 'twas done by his orders—let us go.

[*Crosses to L.*]

Rur. He called me an old rascal—and asked me if I wasn't ashamed of myself—ashamed of—coming.

Tom. Come, come, your errand's over—forget him.

Rur. To me—to me—my hopes—my fond, fond hopes of seeing him again—of reconciling—of—oh, Tom!

Tom. And I, too—but no matter—I loos him off for ever—you shall return to-day to Yorkshire.

Rur. No, not yet—there's some—some mistake—forgive him.

Tom. I cared nout for what he said o' me, but to insult you, his old friend, his father!

Rur. Yes—but he could not mean to—to .

Tom. Why, dommed if ye beant crying. The villain—coom—don't take on so—the—the—

Rur. No—never mind.

Tom. I wouldn't—if I could only get one crack at his poll, I'd forgive him

Rur. Don't be violent. I can't—I won't believe my ears against my heart I'll see him—I'll talk to him as I used. [Crosses, R.

Tom. The heartless reprobate.

Rur. [Sternly.] Tom, I'll not allow you to speak so of your little brother.

Tom. Nay, 'taint bad enough, that's sure.

Rur. God bless me! there—your violence has made me swear—I declare I shall be angry: now, my dear Tom—if you will only leave it all to me, and have patience, you will see that I am right.

[Going, followed by Tom grumbling.

Tom. Go on—defend him again—

Rur. If only you would be quiet

Tom. T'ould man's getting crazy I'm thinking.

Rur. And have patience—now only a little patience.

[Exeunt, L., Rural crying and exultating, followed by Tom, grumbling.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Lady Pompion's Boudoir.*—Decorated in an Arabesque, furnished very richly in buhl and marqueterie. divans, prideux, causeuses, bergères and dormeuses, covered in chintz; tambour frame, and work tables—ornamental writing table—alabaster French clock—Indian screen, &c.

LADY POMPION discovered reclining on a bergère, R., with her feet shawled on an Ottoman, and a Spaniel in her lap.

Lady P. [Yawning and closing a book.] Really, parliament ought to do something for that dear creature, Eugene Sue. I'll speak to the Earl about it! [Strikes a gong.

Enter a richly liveried SERVANT, L.

Has Willis sent out those invitations?

Ser. Yes, my lady.

Lady P. I am not at home this morning to any one.

Ser. Lord Charles Roebuck, my lady, is expected every moment.

Lady P. Oh, true! Charles does arrive to-day from Paris: well, tell him the number of my box at the Opera, and my hour in the ring. I dare say we shall meet—my nerves are not equal to receiving him now. [*Loud and peculiar knock.*] Good heavens! can that be he?

Ser. No, my lady! that is lady Alice Hawthorn's tiger.

Lady P. I'm not at home—I could never survive that girl an hour.

Enter LADY ALICE HAWTHORN, L.

Lady A. Then prepare to die, my dear aunt, for here I am for the day—ha! ha! [*To the Servant.*] Tell my groom to bring my carriage at nine. [*To Lady Pompion.*] You will excuse my leaving your table at so early an hour, but I never miss the last act of the *Barbriere*.

Lady P. My head—my head—the salts—the restoratives.

Lady A. Tom—bring the liqueur case. [*Exit Servant, L.*] Ha! ha! well, my dear, I heard of Charley's arrival, so I have come to dine with you—tell me, what is he like?—partiality apart—is he worth making love to?

Lady P. Charles has not yet arrived home.

Lady A. Why, I saw, by the *Post*, that he arrived in town last night.

Lady P. Indeed! ah! well!—he might as well have sent a card.

Lady A. A card! has he not rattled you up at four in the morning—broken in your knocker panel, and pulled up the bell by the roots? Hasn't he dislocated your wrist and kissed you into an asthma? hasn't—

Lady P. Lady Alice, my son has not the manners of Abdel-Kader to take my establishment by such a surprise, and I trust he always leaves bells and knockers to the servants.

Lady A. Does he? then Charley's occupation's gone

indeed. But *à propos*, Georgy; what fun I had with your old Earl last night at Almack's—ha! ha! ha!

Lady P. My old Earl!

Lady A. He came in, thawed with a decent dinner; the premier's Steinburg had given the *cadavre à bloom* 'pon my life he talked impudence to me.

Lady P. The Earl of Pompion!

Lady A. It would have delighted you to watch such signs of restored animation. A knot of politicians had nearly secured him—politics at Almack's—I darted in amongst them, crying "treason," seized Pompey himself, and whirled him into the most delirious polka.

[*Hums a polka.*

Lady P. A polka!

Lady A. Toe and heel, as I'm a widow and a sinner, we threw Jullien into extacies, till I restored the Home Secretary to his party, a wiser and a better man.

Enter LORD POMPION, c., from L. down L.

Didn't I, Pompey?

Lord P. Lady Alice, *et tous jours gaie*, where's my countess?

Lady A. Not up yet, look! [*Points to Lady Pompion, who is pulling her Spaniel's ears.*] or stay, she is making Bichon's toilette.

Lord P. I forgot to mention that I expect Mr. Coke, of Yorkshire, on a visit: he has lately been returned for Ashby, and I want his interest and a loan to secure Charles for Closeborough—we must show him attention.

Lady P. Very well write down his name, and I'll send it to the housekeeper.

Lady A. Long live old English hospitality!

Lord P. He has some of his family with him.

Lady P. They can have the *britzska*, and you must manage something for their Opera—leave it to the housekeeper.

Lady A. Talking of visitors, I have invited a couple to you.

Lady P. To us!

Lady A. Yes—Colonel Rocket and his daughter old friends of mine—my *bonbonniere* in Brook Street only holds me and my plagues, but, fortunately, having a card

of yours in my case, I thought how glad you'd be. I mentioned six as your dinner hour. Don't be anxious—they'll be here in a minute.

Lord P. How rash—he may be of the opposition.

Lady A. An East India Director, with two boroughs
[*Aside.*] Rabbit ones.

Lord P. Is the girl presentable?

Lady A. Met them at Devonshire House—

Lord P. Two boroughs! my dear Alice, you are rash, but you mean well.

Lady P. Of course I do—only think of two boroughs, Pompey. [*Aside.*] A half-pay colonel, with less interest than a treasury clerk, but a glorious old fellow. I'll bet he'll kiss the Countess in a week—what fun!

[*Lady Alice and Lord Pompion retire up stage, c.*

Enter a SERVANT, L.

Ser. Lord Charles Roebuck.

Enter ROEBUCK, followed by LITTLETON COKE, L.

Roe. My dearest mother!

Lady P. Ah! Charles, how d'ye do, dear? [*Lifts her eye-glass.*] Bless me, how brown you're grown—for heaven's sake, take care of Bichon, there. [*Shakes his hand over the dog.*] Have you brought me the Eau de Cologne?

Roe. Yes, everything—but, my dear mother—

Lady P. Dear—how old he looks for a son of mine.

Lord P. But undoubtedly improved—

[*Advances on the L.*

Roe. My dear father, forgive me!

[*Offering both his hands.*

Lord P. [*Regarding him.*] A Pompion, decidedly.

Lady P. Tell me, Charles, your Italian is Roman—and—ah! I see you wear *Bouquet du Roi*. I understand that *esprit d' Isabella* was the court scent at the Tuilleries, just now.

Lord P. Of course your present appearance is the remains of a diplomatic compliment to the Court of Versailles—very judicious—

Lady P. I trust, Charles, you have picked up no foreign immoralities—I mean, you go to church sometimes; we have a pew at St. George's—and, apropos, have *glacé* silks gone out yet, in Paris?

Roe. Really, dearest mother, I didn't notice.

Lady P. Ah! boys are so thoughtless.

Lord P. You don't make yourself remarkable in dress or equipage, Charles?

Lady P. I hope you have no *penchant* for *liaisons* with public people or unmarried women, dear?

Lord P. Every notoriety, which is not political, is hurtful.

Lady P. I trust you don't swear, Charles—I mean in English; and excuse the anxiety of a mother—you continue to use the almond paste I wrote to you about?

Lord P. Apropos—you'll find in my room a list of the doubtful ones of our party, so that you may know where to lose your money, at Crockford's—of course, you will not enter any of the lower gaming clubs—and, by the bye—be cool to Vernon.

Roe. My dear father—my schoolfellow, Dick Vernon, once saved my life.

Lord P. Possibly—but he voted against us on the Barbadoes Bill, and he has talked of conscientious principles, and in presence of the Premier—in short—he was omitted in the Premier's dinner yesterday—of course, you speak German?

Lady P. Do you bet?

Lady A. Do you Polk?

Roe. Blest voice—surely—it is—

Lady A. Your cousin Alice—how are you, Charley. [*He hesitates.*] all right—go on—[*Roe. crosses to her.*] I'm human nature! [*He kisses her* What's your friend's name? we are acquainted, I know,—but I can't recollect who he is!

Roe. [*Aside.*] Coke—I had almost forgotten him—what can he think of my cold reception; how frigidly they will receive him—I am fairly ashamed to—[*Brings Coke down on the l. c.*] My lord and lady, mother, allow me, Mr. Coke.

Lord P. Coke! of Yorkshire? [*Crosses to Littleton.*

Lit. Yes.

Lord P. Ashby?

Lit. The same.

Lord P. [*Heartily.*] My dear sir, I'm delighted to see you! [*Shaking him by both hands.*] delighted! this is an

unexpected pleasure, to find in you a friend of my son's allow me—the Countess—Mr. Coke, of Ashby.

Lady A. Mr. Coke, of Ashby! Take care of Bichon ha! ha!

Roe. Mr. Coke—Lady Alice Hawthorn, with whom the whole world is in love.

Lady A. Speak for yourself, sir.

[*Speaks aside with Coke.—Lady Pompion sounds a gong, and a Servant enters, L., who unwraps her feet and wraps the dog in the shawl.*]

Lord P. You will excuse me, Mr. Coke—the business of the nation—till dinner, eh? *sans adieu!* [*Shakes his hand.*] Charles, I can spare you a moment; follow me to my study. [*Crosses, L., and exit.*]

Lady A. Adieu, Charles! *au plaisir*, Mr. Poke—by, by, Alice.

Lady A. Adieu, Bichon.

[*Exit Lady Pompion, R., followed by the Servant carrying the dog.*]

Roe. What can this mean? Coke received with such fervour—and this—this is my return, after three years' absence! well! [*Going, L.*]

Lady A. (R.) I say, Charley, are *glacé* silks out in Paris?

Roe. By heaven!

Lady A. Ah! ah! I hope you don't swear—I mean in English! ah! ah! ah! [*Exit Roebuck, L.—Aside.*] So! a pair of recruits to my staff!

Lit. [*Aside.*] And this glorious creature is the deadly widow whom Roebuck gives up without a sigh. [*A pause.*]

Lady A. Well, Mr. Coke, if you have nothing droll to say, give us your maiden speech; on what question do you come out.

Lit. To love, or not to love!

Lady A. I'll settle that—to love—carried, eh?

Lit. Without a division. [*Kisses her hand.*]

Lady A. [*Aside.*] Hang the fellow's impudence.—Well, if you can't say something funny, make me cry; I haven't cried since my marriage, except with laughing. You are on a visit here, eh? you will find it a horrid bore.

Lit. I can view it only as a paradise at present; when your ladyship leaves it, I may see in it a desert.

Lady A. Are you an old friend of my cousin's?

Lit. Lord Charles and I entered Eton on the same day, and never parted for nine years—I may say we are brothers.

Lady A. I have a secret with which I mean to electrify the old folks here—I want a partner in the scheme—can I trust you?

Lit. With your whole heart.

Lady A. Miss Rocket, a friend of mine, is in love with my cousin Charles here—don't stare!—I found it out, and have asked her on a visit.

Lit. To supplant yourself!—why, the Earl sent for Roebuck home, to—expressly—to—marry you.

Lady A. Me! oh, the old fox! Ha! ha! so, so!—so much the better; I'll teach him to keep his intrigues within Whitehall.—To begin, then, let's be friends.

Lit. Ah! beware, Lady Alice! the friend of a young and lovely woman should have sixty years, at least, and holy orders for his qualification.

Lady A. Young man, take my advice; a woman never likes her lover to be more careful of her character than she is herself, or too provident in his heart's economy; your sex arrogates too much on the solitary advantage which nature has given it over ours.

Lit. What is that?

Lady A. You are born without reputation.—What club owns you?

Lit. None!

Lady A. Right—allow neither your opinions nor your society to be dictated to you;—what clique claims you?

Lit. Only one—[*Aside.*] the Queen's Bench,—[*Aloud.*] but they are too exclusive and confined for me.

Lady A. You love liberty?

Lit. As a mistress likely to be lost.

Lady A. You are a man after my own heart.

Lit. I am, and I trust soon to come up with it.

Lady A. What is the world?

Lit. A gentler synonym for vice in town.

Lady A. It seems to me that your sex is capable of but two characters—selfish politicians or reckless gamblers. Did modern chivalry erect new orders, one half nobility would range under the folds of a minister's table cloth, while the other would canonize Crockford

Lit. Fair play, Lady Alice, or I mus. assert my sex.

Lady A. A challenge! tell me, as this sex of yours has adopted every effeminacy of soul in its desire to change genders with ours, when will you assume the fan and flacon?

Lit. When ladies who have already engrafted the whip on the parasol, revel in tops and inconceivables.

Lady A. Women must adopt your habits, if left at home to exercise those duties of husbands which you are performing in every house but your own.

Lit. At home! are ladies ever "at home," except, indeed, when under that pretext they invite the world to see their houses turned out of doors.

Lady A. To exhibit a satire upon men who regard matrimony as a ministerial sinecure.

Lit. [*Half apart.*] The duties of which are only known to the deputy.

Lady A. True; men, whose friendship means a design against a wife's heart, and whose honor only retains its existence for the convenience of swearing by:—spirit, represents to them but a contempt of morality; while to pay, has reference to nothing but visits.

Lit. Ahem! [*Aside.*] she's becoming personal.

Lady A. Aha! [*Aside.*] that hit him in the conscience.

Lit. Were I a woman, such a contemplation of society would almost drive me to suicide.

Lady A. A fashionable alternative and genuine French I've thought of it—but decided on *not* doing the world the honour of cutting it.

Lit. [*Aside.*] What a gorgeous creature. Can I believe that such an angel could ever be my property?

Lady A. Now you are puzzling whether to propose to me next week or the one after—delay it. Meanwhile, make most of your time. I'll send you a voucher for Almack's—I'm a patroness, you know—here's my polka card—let's see; I'm engaged for the 1st, 5th, 9th, and 17th.

[*Sits on Ottoman, R.*

Lit. Put me down for all the rest. Enchantress, you divine my very heart.

[*Sits by her.*

Lady A. What wonder, when you are going to swear that I possess it.

Lit. Ridicule me, if you will. Yes, I confess it, I came

here to see you—to woo you—perhaps to mock—be merciful, for, see—[*Sits on the Ottoman at her feet.*] I remain to pray.

Lady A. [*Opening his hand and applauding on it with her own, as she eyes him through her glass.*] Bravo—not bad—get up now, there's a dear man. I promise not to flirt with any one else for one calendar week—there, don't be vain; I once patronized a boy in the guards for two days, and now he won't enter the pit of the opera, during an aria, for fear of engaging the attention of the house.

Lit. [*Seizes her hand.*] Torturess— [Pauses.

Lady A. Go on.

Lit. [*Looking at her hand.*] You leave it in mine?

Lady A. Certainly, till you have kissed it—[*Littleton kisses her hand.—They come forward.*] Hang the fellow, he does not think I'm gone so far in love with him as to snatch it away.

Lit. I know not what to think, but this I know, that I'm the happiest wretch you ever doomed to misery.

Enter COLONEL ROCKET, c.

Rock. Aha, my little congreve—I've been looking for you everywhere.

Lady A. So, Colonel, I proved a sort of invisible shell, eh? [Crosses, c.

Rock. Only twice as mischievous; I do believe one like you would unman a whole fleet. Ah! your friend in the army?

Lady A. On my own staff! Colonel Rocket—Mr. Coke. [Rocket crosses to Coke.

Rock. Coke! any relation to Cook, of the 23rd? no! ah! sorry for it! brave fellow—cut in two by a chain shot at Pullinabad, was knocked down by his top half myself—gallant fellow—bought his kit for 100 rupees.

Lady A. Where's Kate?

Rock. I picqueted her in the hall with the baggage—happy to make you acquainted, sir,—brought her up for a soldier's wife—perfect in her facings as a light company, and can manœuvre a battalion with any adjutant in the service; look at her walk, thirty inches regulation pace—head up—left leg forward—perfection! that's the way to put a girl into the hands of a husband, sir. [Crosses, L

Lady A. [*Aside to Littleton.*] She twists the old fellow round her finger like a purse!

[*Miss Rocket screams without.*]

Rock. Hollo! that's her discharge—she is retiring upon her supports.

Lady A. Here she comes, as wild as game in July.

Rock. Observe how steady she will file in—right wheel

MISS ROCKET runs in c., her bonnet hanging on her neck.

Kate. He's here—I saw him—I—

Rock. Hollo! fall in—halt—the devil—discipline!

Kate. Yes, my dear father, presently—but I believe he lives in this very house.

Rock. Report yourself, who?

Kate. The gentleman who kissed—I mean, who assisted me when we were upset—he rushed up to me in the hall here—and I was so—I screamed—I—here he is.

Enter ROEBUCK, c.

Roe. Can I believe my eyes? [*Aside, seeing Rocket.*] old Chili vinegar, by Jove!

Rock. Steady, Kate—stand at ease—now, sir, might I ask why, sir,—you—you—damme, sir—why do you drive in my picquet in this way?

Roe. Really—sir—I—I—

Lady A. [*Advancing, r.*] Permit me, Colonel, to introduce to you Lord Charles Roebuck, son of the Earl of Pompion, who is too happy in being your host.

Rock. Sir, your hand. No apology, enough, I accept the quarters. Roebuck, in the army—no!—any relation to Rover, of the 81st, retired on full pay and two wooden legs, after Nepaul? No! no matter—my daughter, Kate Rocket—Bombay Cavalry.

Roe. Allow me to apologise. [*Aside.*] Whom have I to thank for this?

[*Crossing to Kate.*]

Lady A. [*Aside.*] Me! I'm in the secret—she has confessed all to me—I invited them here—am I not an angel!

Roe. [*Aside.*] A divinity! How do you find Coke?

Lady A. As impudent as an heiress!

Roe. My father mistook him for his brother, whose arrival has rectified the error—I have left him closeted with the Earl.

[*Goes up to Miss Rocket.*]

Lady A. Now, Colonel, to introduce you to Lady Pom
 pin—your arm? [*Takes Rocket's arm.*

Rock. Kate, present arms to our host, and follow.

Lady A. Executed with wonderful dispatch.

Rock. Discipline!

[*Roebuck and Miss Rocket, in earnest tête-à-tête, go
 up, R.*

Lady A. Only they are marching without orders.

Rock. Hollo! halt—attention! [*They go out, c., still con-
 versing, without apparently hearing him.*] It's nothing—a
 mere manœuvre—but we musn't club the battalion. We
 only constitute the reserve, instead of the advance—a cle-
 ver movement of Kate's?

Lady A. Very—

Rock. What we call a diversion.

Lady A. Yes, very diverting indeed—ha! ha!

[*Exeunt, c.*

Lit. So now, fate, I'm thy worshipper forever—do with
 me what you will:—this morning I arose without hope; my
 belief in hearts was restricted to the thirteen in a pack
 of cards—and here I am, in a few hours, domiciled in
 Grosvenor Square, with expectations beyond a new rail-
 way company

Enter JESSE RURAL, C.

Strange, too—hum!

Rur. They tell me Littleton is here—in this house—if
 I could only—this gentleman, perhaps, might—pray, sir?

Lit. [*Throwing himself in a chair, R.*] Come what may
 to Thomas Coke, I'll never sign myself a brother.

Rur. Thomas Coke! let me look—[*Takes out his spec-
 tacles tremblingly.*] yes, yes, it is he—it is—he stares at
 me—he won't know me now.

Lit. What a strange old gentleman!

Rur. I tremble to—to—ask him; if he should meet me
 as a stranger—or—how altered he is—in form:—perhaps
 he changed in—

Lit. [*Starting up*] By heaven! I know that face.

Rur. Mr. Coke—I—ventured—I—you don't forget
 your tutor—friend—Jesse Rural.

Lit. [*Running to him and taking both his hands.*] For-
 get you! may Heaven forget me when I do!

Rur. Ha! ha! ha! [*Embracing him.*] bless you my child—God bless you! I knew it—I knew you would. 't
—no—let me look at you—yes—it is you!

Lit. Tell me, how came you here, in town, and in this house?

Rur. Tom came up to Parliament—you know he is member now for Ashby.

Lit. [*Aside.*] Ha! that accounts, then, for the Earl's warm welcome—mistook me for him.

Rur. So I accompanied him to town.

Lit. And he is in this house?

Rur. Yes, he is dressing for dinner. I heard that you were here, and could not contain myself—came to bring you to him; he is unaware of your presence.

Lit. What, creep on my knees to his purse like a prodigal son! In what have I injured him? He has my land, I wrote to offer to sell him the mortgages he held—he refused me.

Rur. The same wild violent spirit he always had—just the same, ha! ha! Littleton, listen to me, my dear boy; Tom loves you, you don't know him. When we went to your chambers this morning—

Lit. You, you! [*Aside.*] it must have been them whom Bob announced, and I mistook—for Scriven and Craft.

Rur. Tom was prepared to forgive you.

Lit. Forgive! 'tis I who claim that office. [*Crosses, l.*

Rur. Ha! he! there he flies out again—the dear boy!

Lit. Let him ask my pardon!—I entreat you will not attempt a reconciliation; it would only sever us more certainly.

Rur. But listen—my darling child, listen—Tom always meant to give you the money you asked for—[*Aside.*] God forgive me! [*Aloud.*] see, here is the very, very sum—look—bless you, take it! [*Takes out a pocket-book.*

Lit. How—and—[*Aside.*] this is impossible—ha! I see—'tis the old man's own savings with which he would conceal Tom's parsimony. [*Aloud.*] No, no—not a farthing! [*Aside.*] how can I refuse it? [*Aloud.*] It comes too late.

Rur. Too late! why? [*Aside.*] I am so delighted to find at last some use for these things. [*Aloud.*] Here comes Tom.

Lit. Do not attract his notice to me; let me manage

this meeting—the Earl supposes we arrived together—
hush! [*Sits with Rural, R.*]

Enter LORD POMPION and TOM COKE, L., LADY POMPION, ROCKET, LADY ALICE HAWTHORN, R., dressed for dinner, followed at a distance by ROEBUCK and Miss ROCKET.

Lord P. Your observations, Mr. Coke, are full of justice and originality.

Lady A. Hardly adapted for the House, then, my lord *Rock.* In the army, Mr. Coke?

Tom. Nay, sir, I'm it yeomanry, if that'll do, though a trust I shall never require ta know ma duty.

Rock. How, sir, you are nervous?

Tom. Nay, not so; it requires courage to tak the life o' an enemy, but it wants more than that to be called on to strike at the heart of a neighbour—I confess, I look with more pity than pride on the ranks of brave fellows, marked out for slaughter, with red on their backs, like my sheep.

Lord P. Necessity, Mr. Coke.

Tom. Not the less sad for that, my lord.

Rock. Who would not die in defence of such a city as London? How did it strike you?

Tom. As big—but not enough to hold the evil done in't.

Lord P. But you admired its buildings?

Tom. Yes—Whitehall, the Nelson Pillar, the Fire Offices, the Duke of York's Pillar, the National Galleries, and the triumphal arches.

Lord P. Ah, sir, an immense sum they cost.

Tom. But what puzzled me was, no one seemed to know who lived in any of 'em.

Lord A. Why, you see—a—nobody lives in them.

Tom. Then I have no hesitation in saying "nobody" is the best housed man in the country.

Lady A. (c.) Surely, sir, you consider our streets are splendid?

Tom. Yes, but not as glorious as the heaven they shut out. Since I came into this city I haven't seen a fair inch of blue sky, or a blade of green grass. Stop—I did, though—yes, I did see a pair sickly plot penned up in a place they called a square, looking as if they'd put nature in a pound for straying into town.

Lady A. Ha! ha! sir, yours will be a distinguished voice in the house.

Tom. And yours is the most musical and honest one I've heard since I left Yorkshire.

Lady A. Here's a hand belonging to it

Lit. [*Aside.*] By Heaven, can she be smitten with him already?

Enter BUTLER, c.

But. Dinner, my lady.

Lord P. Colonel Rocket, her ladyship—permit me.

[*Leads the way, followed by Rocket and Lady Pom-pion, c.*

Tom. [*To Lady Alice.*] You'll favour me.

[*Offers his arm to her on her l.*

Lit. [*Starting up.*] Lady Alice, my arm is at your service.

[*Offers on the other side*

Tom. Ha!—it—it—must be!

Lady A. [*Looking surprisedly from one to the other*] Your—brother, I believe.

Tom. Here—and I—dom it—I canna help it! [*Affectionately.*] Yes, it—is my brother.

[*Offering his hand, Littleton bows coldly.*

Lit. I fear, your ladyship, they wait for us—

Lady A. [*Looking with reproof on him.*] True—they do

[*Takes Tom's arm and goes up with him.—Exeunt, c.*

Lit. My brother and my rival! be it so!

[*Walks violently up and down, followed by Rural.*

Rur. Don't be violent, my dear boy—

Lit. Yes—I will not let her see how she can wound me—and him—'twould be too deeply gratifying. [*Rural takes his arm.*] I will go—yes.

Rur. That's right.

[*Coke takes fierce strides, Rural meaning to keep up with him—he suddenly stops.*

Lit. Yet can I endure without betraya—I must.

[*Exit rapidly with Rural, c.*

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Drawing-Room in Lady Pompion's House Arch, c., draped and surmounted with a rich Cornice, discovering an inner Drawing-Room with a fireplace in c. f.—Fireplace and fire, R. T. E., Windows, R. S. E. and L., draped in rich crimson damask and gilded valences.—The Room is decorated in white and gold, with a bouquet pattern, a brilliant chandelier, branches between the windows, and divans and consols R., and L., mirrors and chandelier in the inner room.*

LADY ALICE is discovered playing at a Piano, L. U. E., TOM COKE leaning over it—RURAL is seated, L., on a prieux, reading a pamphlet.—LORD POMPION and COLONEL ROCKET are walking up and down, from L. to R. corner of the inner room, while LADY POMPION is lying on a sofa opposite the fire, a SERVANT is offering her coffee on a salver, while another SERVANT waits with liqueurs. LITTLETON COKE is playing with her Spaniel, but watching Lady Alice and Tom. ROEBUCK and MISS ROCKET are seated on a flirting vis-à-vis, pretending to play ecarte on a small ornamental table.

Rock. My opinion is, that a submarine battery is attracted to the keel of the vessel, and exploded by concussion.

Lord P. Bless me! had Guy Faux lived in these times, what would become of the House of Peers?

Rock. Pooh! vote me a hundred thousand pounds, and I'll undertake to blow up both houses.

[They go up conversing, c.]

Roe. I propose.

Kate. I won't let you, I've a beautiful hand.

Roe. I've been admiring it.

[Plays.

Kate. I take your heart.

[Takes a trick.

Roe. I wish you would take my hand with it.

[Plays his last card.

Kate. I do, the game's mine;—what were we playing for?

Roe. For love—

Kate. Exactly—that means for nothing.

[They flirt aside.—Lord Pompion watches them, while Colonel Rocket joins Lady Alice.

Rur. [*To Lady Pompion.*] Your ladyship, may I entreat your sympathy and beneficence in favour of a subscription I am raising for a poor creature, a widow with eight children?

Lady P. Widows never appear to have less—have I seen the case in the *Morning Post*?

Rur. Not that I am aware of.

Lady P. Pray, sir, let me see your list—what people of importance have subscribed? [*To Coke.*] one gets one's name mixed up with such *canaille* in these charities. [*To Rural.*] In whose name, sir, is it raised, pray?

Rur. In that of the most bountiful Dispenser of all Good.

Lady P. Ah! sorry—we are not acquainted.

[*Turns away and takes coffee from Servant.*]

Lord P. Colonel Rocket, a word. [*They advance.*]

Rock. My lord?

[*Lord P. takes him into R. corner and speaks apart.*]

Lady A. [*To Tom.*] Ha! ha! you strange creature—I declare I will storm Sykes Hall next September.

Lit. [*Aside.*] This is done to torture me—and succeeds

Tom. We will show you old English sports.

Lady A. Suppose, after my invasion, I should determine to occupy.

Tom. I'd ask no better.

Lit. The devil! [*Nearly chokes the Spaniel, who howls.*]

Lady P. Mr. Coke, my poor Bichon! [*Snatches it up.*]

Lit. Really, I—[*Aside.*] Damn the dog! [*Coming down.*] I can suffer this agony no longer—although she may despise my want of pride in suing her after my exhibition of ill-temper—what would I give to be able to affect her indifference? No! after all my oaths to bring her to submission first—Here I go!

[*Goes up and joins Lady A.*]

Lord P. [*Aside to Rock.*] In a word, Colonel Rocket, your attentions are thrown away—My dear sir, recollect—the son of a peer!

Rock. My—daughter.

Lord P. With all respect—I have other view for him, and, excuse my candour—but the Pompions came over after the Battle of Hastings, and have never yet mingled with anything but Norman blood.

Rock. Damn it, my lord, Kate Rocket need not look up to blood royal—her mother was the Begum of Curry-pore, princess of the first caste; she was the only one of her family my guns had left alive—I took her in a brisk charge after she had shot two horses under me, no censure, my lord—but her ladyship don't show such blood as that.

Lord P. No! My Countess is not of a fusileer family—pardon me, I feel my honesty is almost plebeian, but should your daughter's name suffer by contact with my son's, don't blame him. [Goes up, R.]

Rock. Blame! certainly not, I'll blow his brains out!
[Calls.] Kate!

Kate. [Rises.] Colonel! [Joins him.]

Rock. [Aside.] We leave this house to-morrow.

Kate. [Aside.] To-morrow! [Looks at Roebuck.]

Rock. Orders given, no appeal—duty—damme—ha! ha! that peer is as proud of—of the Norman puddle that stagnates in his heart, as if his country had ever seen any of it—ha! Battle of Hastings! ha! a pretty affair that must have been, when there's no mention of it in the Army List! ha! damme if I think there ever was such a battle.

Roe. [To Lord P., who has been speaking aside to him.] Be careful! wherefore, my lord?

Lord P. [To Roebuck.] I have discovered that all the Government interest he possesses is confined to 3 per cent. on 5000*l.*, and he is no more an East India Director than my valet. Need I say more? [Goes up, c.]

[Littleton leaves Lady Alice, who has been devoting herself to Tom, and advances.]

Lit. 'Tis useless. I have yielded up my will, soul, and all to her—I cannot escape her torture—struggling wounds me more than patient suffering. Heaven—to what despicable slavery can manhood be reduced!

Rur. [Joining him.] My dear boy, what's the matter? why do you look so darkly at Tom? is he not your brother?

Lit. Is he so?—why then has he crossed me through life—has he not devoured my inheritance—am I not a beggar?

Rur. No—not while a roof and crust are mine. Littleton—listen to me—I left my cure, my people in the country, for the holy purpose of uniting you again: I entered this wilderness to bring back a lost sheep.

Lit. Then you should have come unaccompanied by the wolf—I care not to avow it—I am madly in love.

[*Crosses, L.*

Rur. My goodness!

Lit. Servilely—despicably—meanly—infatuated—willing—anxious to exchange degrading worship for contempt, to return blind grovelling adoration for indifference!

Rur. The dear impetuous boy.

Lit. Look around you, and judge if I have cause for misery.

[*Goes up and seats himself, R.*

Rur. Misery—cause—let me see! [*Puts on his spectacles, looks round, sees Roebuck and Miss Rocket.*] Oh! oh! oh! there it is—well—poor Littleton! perhaps I can do something here! it may not be hopeless.

[*Tom comes down, L.*

Tom. 'Tis my opinion there's honest nature in that girl, and wholesome feeling, too—I'll wait, and see if it be his lordship's Burgundy, or my reason, that's at work upon my heart—Minister!

[*Rural advances, R.*

Rur. Well, Tom.

Tom. You noticed yon blithe lass, I'm thinking.

Rur. I did, Tom.

Tom. Do't again—I'm not clear about it; but it's more than likely I'm in love.

Rur. Bless me, how very remarkable!

Tom. I have hesitated, minister, because I thought Littleton did seem that way inclined.

Rur. Thank heaven, I can answer no to that!—no, Tom, he *is* in love, but 'tis there. [*Points to Miss Rocket.*

Tom. Ar't sure?

Rur. He owned it to me.

Tom. 'Tis loike him—to drag a poor, trusting, loving girl from comfort here—to share his discontent.

[*Goes up, R.*

Rur. I'm determined—yes, that will do—the bequest left me by the father of these boys, I have never thought of till this moment—'tis not a fortune, but with my vicarage—enough—enough—Littleton shall have her—I—I will provide for all—they shall come to me, and my happiness will be too much—more than I deserve; then Tom will relent, I know his good heart, and I shall be blessed in their union once again!—how shall I begin?—

[*Thinks apart.*

Enter the GROOM OF THE CHAMBERS, L., with shawls.

Serv. The carriage waits, my lady.

Lady P. I had almost forgotten the opera.

Lord P. [*Advancing c.*] Mr. Coke, a seat in our box is at your service. [*Tom crosses to Lady P. and shawls her, then crosses back to Lady Alice.*]

Tom. Oh, too happy, [*To Lady Alice,*] does your ladyship accompany us?

Lady A. I don't mind, though I have a box of my own on the pit tier—Russell, have they sent my Brougham?

Serv. Not yet, my lady.

Lady A. Then, I'll follow you, for I hate three in a chariot.

Lady P. Charles, dear, do take Bichon to his valet. I think he's sleepy.

Lord P. Colonel, shall we stroll down to the house?

Rock. Your lordship's pardon—I've an appointment at my club—the Oriental.

Lady A. Here, one of you men, run and see if my carriage is come. [*To Littleton.*] You'll do, and ask my footman if the *lorgnette* is in the pocket. There, do go, run. [*Exit Littleton Coke, L.*] Colonel, [*Taking Rocket's arm,*] suppose you propose me at the Oriental?

Rock. Would you not prefer being a member of the Jockey Club?

Lady A. No; I could amuse myself with your old drolls, but nothing appears to me so slow as your *soi-disant* fast man. Come, do propose me

Rock. You would kill us all off with laughing in a week.

Lady A. Do, now!

Rock. No, no. [*Exeunt talking, L. Lady Pompion and Tom go out, L., Kate, following Roebuck, with dog shawled up, is going, R.*]

Roe. [*Dropping the dog.*] Miss Rocket, one word.

Kate. Don't detain me!—[*Aside.*] I must let him know how valuable his time is, or he will let me go.—[*Aloud.*] Let me say farewell, my father leaves town to-morrow

Roe. To-morrow!—then there is no time for delicacy.

Kate. Not a mom—that is, I mean, let me go—how I tremble—

Roe. Lean on me!

Kate. Thank you. I am so faint—

Roe. Do, if we are discovered!

Kate. I will. What am I saying?

Rur. [*Aside—coming down, R.*] How very extraordinary—here's more love. It appears to me that the young people in this house don't do anything else.

Roe. [*While Miss Rocket hides her face in her hands.*] Kate—dear Kate—need words pass between us, doesn't this speak for itself? Your father's tyranny will defeat itself, and excuse this precipitation of an avowal.

Kate. My father's tyranny!—you mean that of the severe and haughty earl.

Roe. No, dearest, fear nothing from him—I am his son, 'tis true, and, as such, will yield him the obedience I ought. But 'tis to my children, not to my father, that I am answerable for the choice of my heart—I claim, therefore, my freedom and your hand—assure me that I have won it.

Kate. Spare me a reply—but, my father—

Roe. On what pretext can he withhold his consent?

Kate. On the earl's dislike to our union.

Roe. Ha! I see—my father has already spoken to the colonel—that accounts for his sudden departure.

Kate. I fear so—but don't mind papa, he's nobody—

Roe. How—are not his orders peremptory?

Kate. Yes—so is his obedience—he's a dear, noisy old man—the worst-tempered, best-hearted creature in the world; he's fond of reviewing, so I let him burn his powder, and then I march him home again—ha! ha!

Roe. I took him for a tyrant.

Kate. He? why he has the heart of a woman—when my mother died, before I was two years old, I've heard that he would watch me like a nurse—fearing to touch me, but envying the Ayeh to whom I was confided.

Roe. But you had some female relatives?

Kate. Not one—nor did I feel their absence. I felt myself, as our mess-room used to toast me, “the fair colonel.” Oh, Charles, you will love him so—could you have seen him as I have, under the scorching sun of India, pacing along the ranks, trying to inspect the men with a regulation frown, and swearing down their honest murmurs of “bless his old wig and spurs,” 'till suffocated

with their benedictions, with tears in his eyes, he'd cry—"Get out of the sun, you mutinous rascals! Dismiss!—I'll flog every man of you—march—God bless you, boys." Oh, I could have cried with pride.

Roe. And when you leave this, where do you go?

Kate. To our villa at Closeborough.

Roe. The very seat which I was to represent; the election, or rather the nomination, occurs to-morrow.

Kate. Another obstacle—my father's politics

Roe. I am a martyr to them—I abdicate the honour in favour of Littleton Coke—but have you no excuse which your departure might be retarded?

Kate. I—yes—my father's gout has prevented him lately from accompanying me in my daily ride; he has consented to allow me a groom of my own; I have not yet selected a—

Roe. A groom? A moment—ha! will you take one of my recommendation? one in whose confidence you may rely as in my own.

Kate. What do you mean?

Roe. Rely on me—I mean all for the best.

Kate. I have no will but yours.

Roe. My angel!

[*Kisses her.*]

Enter COLONEL ROCKET, L.

Rock. Hollo, there—Kate—recover arms—the devil!

Kate. My father!

Rock. You—you—you—here's mutiny! and you, sir how dare you, against general orders? [*Crosses to c.*]

Roe. Hush! my father!—should he overhear.

Rock. Don't think your Norman blood will—

Kate. } *Together.* { Hush! I entreat—the Earl.

Roe. } { We shall be ruined.

Rock. [*Still enraged, but under his breath.*] What do I care whether he hears or not—I hope he will—you pair of disaffected mutineers. [*Gradually breaking out.*] Don't imagine I want to steal a recruit from your family into mine—because I'd see it—

Kate. My dear father! he's only in the next room.

Roe. The Earl—for Heaven's sake—

Rock. [*Under his breath.*] Very well, then—don't Earl me—who's the Earl?—you?—harkye, sir, [*Kate throws*

her arms round his neck,] you may have come over after the battle of Hastings—though I can't say I see much glory in arriving when the fight's done—but I can count scars for every branch in your genealogical tree—so look ye, if you think there's any ambuscade here to catch your lordship, fall back—your retreat is still open; but if you try a surprise on my baggage here, damme, look out for a warm reception. [*Kate stops his mouth with a kiss.*

Rur. Don't be alarmed, Colonel, I heard it all.

Roe. [*Aside.*] Ruin—ruin—nothing can prevent this simple old fellow from committing our secret with my father.

Rock. You have brought on a twinge of the gout, you have, you graceless baggage—then what do you care—you'd run off with the first fellow whose grandfather came over after the battle of Hastings, and leave your infirm old father with nothing to swear at but his crutch. If I had a family poodle to leave my money to, damme I'd cut you off with a rupee—give me a kiss—I would, you—oh!—don't laugh at my sufferings—oh!

[*Exeunt, assisted by Miss Rocket, L.*

Roe. My dear old friend, one word.—[*Aside.—Brings Rural forward,*] what shall I say?—You never thought I was making love to that lady?

Rur. It did strike me—but if not, what were you making?

Roe. Why, can't you guess?

Rur. No! making love is very unlike anything else I know of.

Roe. You are right—I was—but—but—not on my own account.

Rur. Oh!

Roe. I pressed the suit for—for a friend—in fact, for Coke.

Rur. For Littleton?

Rock. [*Without, L.*] Don't tell me—

Kate. [*Without, L.*] No—but—

Roe. You must be aware that I am destined by my father for Lady Alice—and—of course—I—I am devoted to her.

Rur. And Littleton was jealous of you! generous young man! how he will repent when he is aware of

his unjust suspicion; I know my dear boy is in love with the lady, he has confessed it to me.

Roe. [*Half aside.*] The devil he has!

Rur. Now, leave the rest to me—

Roe. Oh! there's some mistake here.

Rur. I will get the Colonel's consent—I'll do it at once before I see Littleton—not a word to him. Let me surprise him with it. Oh, Littleton! [*Exit, L.*

Enter LITTLETON COKE, L. C.

Roe. My dear fellow, you must aid me

Lit. In what?

Roe. Old Rocket leaves this to-morrow, taking Kate with him. I have determined to accompany them.

Lit. How?

Roe. The lady wants a groom.

Lit. You never mean to undertake the place.

Roe. When I have removed these foreign decorations from my chin and lips, I'd defy the eyes of Argus to know me.

Enter SERVANT, L.

Serv. Mr. Bribe, sir, wishes to see his lordship.

Roe. Bribe, the devil—very well, Thomas. [*Exit Servant, L.*] That's my father's solicitor and parliamentary agent, come to arrange accounts for my nomination.—What's to be done?

Lit. What's Bribe's fee?

Roe. A thousand pounds.

Lit. I'll offer him fifteen hundred to go down on my account.

Roe. But is it practicable?—will he?

Lit. Anything is practicable to a lawyer for five hundred pounds. But we must find some one to represent a partner in his firm, who is unknown by sight to your father.

Roe. Crawl's the man, an arrant vote-broker.

Lit. Then Crawl shall enjoy an honest reputation for a day, in the person of Bob.

Roe. Is he equal to it?

Lit. I'll back him with odds at anything, from winning a kitchen wench, to a speech from the woolsack.

Roe. He is here—where shall I find him?

Lit. Have you any spot in the house dedicated especially to the maids and mischief? if so, raise your voice in that quarter.

Enter BOB, cautiously, L.

Bob. Sir! sir!

[*Looks about.*]

Lit. Here he is.

Bob. I've sent your address to the *Closeborough Independent*, sir.

Lit. My address!

Bob. To the free and enlightened electors—you'll find it sharp and undecided, sir—I've been rather abusive in my allusions to your lordship, but one cannot be political without being personal; therefore, when I refer to your lordship, from the hustings to-morrow, as only falling short of a fool by being born a knave, and the disgrace you are to the aristocracy—[*To Littleton.*] Oh, sir, I've not read the debates for nothing.—[*To Roebuck.*] Your lordship will understand me to speak professionally.

Roe. Why—you—you—

Lit. [*Crosses to Roebuck, and aside.*] Never mind, wait till I can afford to pay him his wages, I'll not forget you. [*To Bob.*] We require you to adopt the name and character of a gentleman who is expected here, and to personate him before Lord Pompion: can you do it?

Bob. That depends upon whom he is.

Roe. Crawl, the attorney and agent.

Bob. [*To Littleton.*] I thought you spoke of a gentleman.

Lit. Nonsense, sir; can you play the attorney?

Bob. *Facilis descensus averni*, as Virgil said, when you were at college, sir. I'll adopt the character, but I'm afraid my honesty will show through and spoil the assumption.

Lit. No fear of that. Accompany Lord Charles, he will give you instructions.

Roe. 'Tis a fearful alternative, but there is no time to invent; I'll despatch Bribe at once. [*To Bob.*] This way. *Gare!* here comes the widow! [*Exeunt, Roe. & Bob, R.*]

Lit. The widow, and once more alone, ha! I feel that if I could mask my impetuosity for a moment, I might at least discover my position. but my love is in its own way, and--

Enter LADY ALICE HAWTHORN L.

[*Aside.*] Here she is.

Lady A. [*Aside.*] I thought he had gone without me—ha! I almost believe I like the fool. [*Littleton sits and writes.*] I must discover why these brothers do not speak.—I was thinking of trying the opera for an hour, Mr. Coke.

Lit. Not a bad idea—[*Writing,*] my distracted love is too perceptible—[*Aloud,*] the opera, ay! [*Aside,*] could she have refused to accompany Tom and the Countess, to secure a *tête-à-tête* with me?—I dare not hope it.—[*Writing.*] “*In the fond hope.*”

Lady A. [*Aside.*] Why, I do believe the fellow is writing a love letter.

Lit. [*Still writing.*] “*Grisi*”—yes—ah—eh—I beg your pardon—you’ll allow me to ring for your carriage.

Lady A. [*Aside.*] So he thinks he is sure of me—oh! yes—hang his smirking self-sufficient grin—that letter is to me—now, if I liked him less, I would torture him till—why—he is not going to seal it!

Lit. [*Burning the wax.*] Lady Alice, I remarked a minute signet ring on your lovely hand: will you favour me with it for an instant?

Lady A. Nonsense; it bears the motto, “*L’amour est.*”

Lit. Love defunct—excellent. You keep it to seal your death warrant, to the heart of a discarded lover. [*Seals the letter.*] Spirituelle—ha! [*Kisses the ring, and returns it to her finger, kissing her hand.*]

Lady A. Well—ahem—[*Aside.*] He does not give it to me—[*Littleton writes,*] he directs it—really, I—[*Littleton extinguishes the taper and advances,*] feel very—oh, here he comes—ha! he was too nervous to speak—I—

Lit. Lady Alice—

Lady A. [*Aside.*] His voice trembles—ha!—[*Littleton walks round her, and takes up a shawl,*] he’s swimming round the hook.

Lit. You were talking of the opera— *Crossing, L.*

Lady A. [*Aside.*] The float sinks

Lit. Allow me, before you go—

Lady A. [*Aside.*] I have him!

Lit. Go shawl you.

Lady A. Sir!—[*Aside.* He's off.

Lit. [*Folding the shawl.*] Happy shawl!—Blest cashmere!—why was I not born amongst you to be continually hugged round such a lovely form as this. [*Shawling her.*] Allow me to ring for the carriage.

Lady A. [*Aside.*] Hang the fellow, I'll have that letter if I die for it.—A warm correspondence that of your's, if I may judge by your escaped expression.

Lit. [*Aside.*] Aha! 'tis a bite, as I expected—now, I'll play with her a little.—Warm! oh, yes; and, apropos, you may be of some assistance to me.

Lady A. Assistance!

Lit. Yes; you might deliver the letter. I am sure the interest you took in me this morning, will excuse the confidence I ask you to give us.

Lady A. Us!

Lit. Yes. [*Gives the letter.*] I'm an humble aspirant to—

Lady A. [*Reading.*] Miss Rocket!

Lit. You seem surprised.

Lady A. Surprised! and the lady—she encourages you?

Lit. Look at me, and don't wound my feelings by reiterating the question.

Lady A. And your—your—ha! ha!—your protestations to me—

Lit. Egad, that's true. I forgot—oh, don't mistake me—when I offer Miss Rocket my hand, allow me to express at the same time, my wild adoration of your ladyship in the abstract—It's a fearful mania of mine.

Lady A. Ha! ha! and you thought I reciprocated your empty expression of—Oh!—[*Aside.*] I shall choke—Perhaps, you even imagined I was in love with you.

Lit. I did.

Lady A. Disabuse your mind of it, I beg—you flatter yourself!

Lit. You are not in love with me?

Lady A. Not in the least.

[*Crosses to L.*

Lit. Ah, true—how could one expect Heaven to endow you with beauty and sense at the same time.

Lady A. And do you imagine, sir, that I will permit my friend to remain in ignorance of your treachery?

Lit. Quite the contrary. I feel convinced you will in

stantly apprise her of the fact—Oh! I don't wish to take her at any disadvantage—I wish to owe nothing but to the unaided dynamics of personal appearance.

Lady A. [*Aside.*] The egregious puppy—my heart should disinherit him—cut him off with a sigh—but that I feel it has quitted this world [*Touching her heart,*] without a will.

Lit. [*Aside.*] She loves me, and now begins to feel it. As I proceed I gain more confidence.—You seem rather animated! sorry that I'm compelled to leave you alone with your feelings—excuse the imputation. [*Eyeing her.*] I see you possess those inconveniences; they impart expression, and are amusing enough to observe—but must be very troublesome in their manufacture.

Lady A. [*Aside.*] I would esteem this man a brute, but 'twould be a libel upon quadrupeds, for he wants their animation.

Lit. You are bored, I see—regret I can't amuse—possessing only the ability to be amused. Shall I ring for *your* dog or *my* brother?

Lady A. Don't trouble yourself! were I inclined to laugh at anything, you would do, very well.—[*Aside.*] I *could* cry, but I won't.

Lit. Farewell! I tear myself away.—[*Looks at his watch.*] I'm agonized with the necessity, but I see the ballet has commenced, and I would not miss the *Truandaise* for a thousand.

[*Lounges up and out, c., humming an air.*]

Lady A. Can this be real?—what need I care?—I'll go to the opera and find fifty lovers there, make each commit fifty follies, and revenge myself on the sex.

[*Throws herself on sofa.*]

Enter RURAL, L.

Rur. What a fearful mistake I had nearly committed—the Earl has just been speaking of his son's projected marriage with this lady; I must find Tom, and tell him so—poor fellow! 'tis well he has not known her long enough to feel her loss. But, how delighted Littleton will be to hear that his suspicions were unfounded; now, now, I can conscientiously promote their happiness.

Lady A. [*Apart.*] Yet, his fervour was so natural.]

could not be mistake in his honesty—he *does* love me—on my life he does.

Rur. [*Aside.*] I must get some assistance in my plot, these young hearts are such strange things.—My dear young lady, I want your help in a little plot of mine; you understand these matters better than I do and will assist me—Littleton has fallen in love.

Lady A. [*Aside.*] Bless this dear old man, he's always in the wrong.—Ha! he has confessed it to you, then?

Rur. He is as open-hearted as a child; but you will not mention it?

Lady A. I think I was his first confidant, sir.

Rur. Then, you will join me, in trying to reconcile these dear children, and recovering to my affection, my favourite—I mean, my dearest hope.

Lady A. I will.—[*Aside.*] I thought it was affectation—but I am too happy to think of revenging it. Yes, yes, yes, my dear, dear sir—I will be all you wish—all he wishes.

Rur. What a kind, warm heart it is.

Lady A. Where is he?

Rur. I dare say, like young folks—ha! he has stolen to her.

Lady A. To her—who?

Rur. Miss Rocket—bless me, are you ill?

Lady A. Miss Rocket! Has he then—

Rur. Confessed to me his love for her—yes—his grovelling adoration—servilely, meanly, despicably infatuated—bless his impetuous heart!

Lady A. And Lord Charles?—

Rur. Nobly presses his suit.

Lady A. I cannot believe it.

Rur. My dear child, his lordship told me so himself.

Enter MISS ROCKET, L.

Lady A. Kate—tell me—are you deceiving me?

[*Crosses to Kate.*

Kate. What do you mean?

Lady A. Mr. Coke is in love with you.

Kate. With me!

Lady A. He has been confessing it all over the house—to me—to him—to Lord Charles—

Kate. Why, it can't be—what means Lord Charles's declaration to me?

Rur. My dear young lady, he means nothing to you: you mistook his intentions—he was wooing for his friend, who was ridiculously jealous of him—Lord Charles told me just now that he was betrothed to her ladyship, and devoted to her—the earl has since said the same thing—therefore it must be true.

Lady A. Kate!

Kate. Alice!

Lady A. That villain, Charles, wished at once to deceive his friend—destroy you—and cheat me.

Kate. Destroy me—oh, Alice! [They embrace.]

Rur. Tears! what strange things young hearts are.

Enter a SERVANT, L.

Serv. Your ladyship's carriage waits.

Lady A. Kate—be a woman— [Crosses, R.]

Rur. She is—she is a woman—

Lady A. These pair of wretches are doubtless in the stalls at the opera, directing a *lorgnette* battery against all the beauty in the house; let us go and show them we can be as heartless as they.

[Crosses to L., goes to table, and gets an opera-glass.]

Rur. Yes—exactly—what can it all mean? There is nothing so puzzling to an old head, as a young heart.

[Lady Alice takes one of Rural's arms, and places her opera-glass in his hand.]

There! my dear child—don't weep. [Is going to apply her handkerchief to her eyes, when Miss Rocket takes the other arm and checks him.] Well! woman is a wonderful and mysterious thing!

Lady A. Wretches—both.

Rur. Ah!

Kate. Villains!

Rur. Yes—[Aside.] I wonder what they mean, and what they are going to do with me?

[Exeunt, ladies pulling Rural through centre door.]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The same as Act III.*

Enter COLONEL ROCKET, c., with a newspaper.

Rock. Here's news! A copy of this evening's *Closeborough Independent* has been despatched to me. [*Reads.*]
 "We gladly issue a second edition, to give the earliest publicity to the following address, which reached us after going to press:—

"To the Independent Electors of Closeborough.

"Gentlemen—In reply to a requisition from a numerous and highly respectable body of your townsmen, I too happily accede to your wishes, and shall be proud to represent your opinions in Parliament, which I cannot but suppose are violently adverse to those of my noble friend and antagonist, Lord Roebuck, whose character, speaking publicly, I must despise—but whose private character, generally, I know nothing about.

"I am, gentlemen, your obedient servant,

"LITTLETON COKE."

Hurrah! now I can show fight! now I've outflanked his Norman Lordship. My villa at Closeborough, Ghuznee Lodge, and its estate, gives me the influence of thirty votes—ha! ha! ha! I'll not sleep another night beneath this noble roof—I've despatched orders to Corporal Stripe to have the guard out, in their old uniforms—my travelling carriage will be here in two hours—I'll canvass the whole town before breakfast. Ho! ho! damme, I've never been so excited since Bhurtpore!

Enter RURAL, l. c.

Rur. Had I been the first-born of Richelieu, and the favourite pupil of Machiavel, I could not have surrounded myself with more intrigues, plots, and difficulties. Those two dear girls took me to the opera; they beguiled the way, by crying and endeavouring to discover which could invent the worst name for her lover. When we arrived, I found myself amongst soldiers and footmen

then labrynths and lights; then in a little closet with one wall out, apparently for the admission of noise and glare I was astonished into the place, and amazed out of it, and thankful I am to get here again.—[*Aside.*] Here's the Colonel—I'll venture to—to sound him about his consent to the marriage.—My military friend, will you allow me to ask—has Littleton acquainted you with—his intentions?

Rock. No, sir—I wish he had—however, accident has revealed them to me.

Rur. And dare he hope that you will grant your consent?

Rock. Grant! I'll secure his success. He shall have Jack Rocket's interest, sir.

Rur. Then you approve of his offer? [*Astonished.*]

Rock. I could not have selected from all England a finer fellow—more after my own heart.

Rur. He is—he is—

Rock. Noble souled.

Rur. Princely.

Rock. Honest, free.—

Rur. God bless you!

Rock. No stiff-backed pretension—

Rur. What a kind soul you are.

Rock. I'll lay a thousand, *his* father was *at* the battle of Hastings.

Rur. But, your daughter—

Rock. Kate! ay—she'll go with him, heart and soul!

Rur. She will; she has said as much.

Rock. Bless her heart, it always says right.

Rur. My dear benefactor, don't, don't overcome me with gratitude: what shall I say or do—may I run and tell Littleton?

Rock. Tell the rascal, I'll never forg' ve him not coming to me at first.

Rur. At first, ha! ha!

Rock. Tell him, my carriage is at his service—my house at his command.

Rur. Ha! ha! I shall do something very foolish for joy when I get out!

Rock. Advise him to lose no time: he should clinch the affair before breakfast to-morrow.

Rur. To-morrow! isn't that rather, rather early, eh?

Rock. Too late sir—I like despatch.

Rur. But the lady?

Rock. Kate! pooh! you don't know the gir' she'll spring up at five in such a cause.

Rur. Bless me!

Rock. No more—I'm off. Remember my carriage will be at the door in two hours, let him use it.

Rur. Use it to—

Rock. Not a word—orders given—ho! great guns! this is glorious!

Rur. Miraculous!

Rock. I'm in the saddle again, huzza! [*Twinges.*] Oh! the gout!—I'm a rusty old arquebuse, only fit to hang up for a show of old times; but no! I'll be charged and primed, and damme I'll go off once more, if I'm blown to the devil for it!—Hurrah! eh! ha! ha! hurrah.

[*The Colonel shouts, becomes excited, and exit, l. Rural, very excited, joins feebly in his boisterous shouts.*]

Rur. Hurrah! bless me, how exciting all this is;—ha! ha! [*He runs about.*] I'm inclined to do something very frantic—Huzza!

Enter LORD POMPION, R. C.

Lord P. My dear sir.—[*Aside.*] What is the old man about?—Will you have the kindness to inform Mr. Coke—

Rur. Certainly, in two hours—

Lord P. I mean the member, sir; that I would be happy to see him here—

Rur. Before breakfast—

Lord P. On parliamentary business—

Rur. Of course. Tell the rascal I'll never forgive him.

Lord P. Mr. Rural—will you—

Rur. Spring up at five in such a cause. [*Crosses to R.*]

Lord P. He is possessed—

Rur. Great guns! this is glorious! Hurrah! hurrah!

[*Exit Rural, c.*]

Enter SERVANT, L.

Serv. Mr. Crawl, my lord.

Lord P. Show him in. [*Exit Servant, l.*] Charles informs me that Bribe sends word that he is engaged against us by the opposing candidate; but he has proved himself a trustworthy fellow, for he has despatched an

intelligent and junior partner in his firm, whom he feels assured will carry all before him. We must do something for Bribe—fidelity should be rewarded.

Enter SERVANT, L.

Serv. Mr. Crawl.

Enter BOB, L., *dressed in black.*—*Exit* Servant, L.

Lord P. Mr. Crawl?

Bob. Of the firm of Bribe, Crawl, and Treatem.

Lord P. Fame speaks highly of you, Mr. Crawl, and parliament has its eye on you. Fortune favoured me, when, twenty years ago, I selected your firm for my solicitors.

Bob. I remember the era. Its date—I think—is on your lordship's first mortgage to us.

Lord P. A tenacious memory—be seated. [*Points to chair.*] How fortunate for us that Bribe is secured to our opposing candidate.

Bob. He's a treasure—

Lord P. So are you—

Bob. Oh, I'm a mint, my lord, a perfect mint—I'll coin you votes that shall pass current with any Committee of the House—I'll put you in for any borough in Great Britain, and return you with any majority you may please to pay for—I'll qualify you with three hundred a-year, landed property, for fifty pounds, and show more voters in your interest unpolled, than there is population in the county.

Lord P. My dear Mr. Crawl!

Bob. Oh, my Lord—that's nothing.

Lord P. I may conclude my son elected, then?

Bob. Chaired—and has returned thanks in a neat speech, which I have already prepared.

Lord P. Then I may venture to dismiss anxiety from my mind—and enter on other topics.

Bob. [*Aside.*] Other topics—master didn't prime me for other topics.

Lord P. Fifteen years ago—

Bob. [*Aside.*] Oh, lord!

Lord P. It may be in your tenacious recollection that I confided to the care of Mr. Bribe, a boy.

Bob. Oh! perfectly—a perfect child—a—a mere—a—boy—a—oh, I perfectly—

Lord P. The—the—son of an old and valued servant

Bob. Female?

Lord P. No—my butler.

Bob. Oh!

Lord P. I promised to—to—protect—to educate—my—I mean, his child—and confided the responsibility to Bribe's charge.

Bob. [*Aside.*] Oho!—the Earl has been a gay deceiver in his youth—ahem!—not much of the Lothario left!

Lord P. I—I left England shortly after this occurrence, as ambassador to the court of Lisbon—since my return—business—a—

Bob. Of course. I see.—Oh, yes—I know the boy—a fine fellow he has grown—an universal favourite.

Lord P. Indeed!

Bob. His name is Robert, but we call him Bob, familiarly.

Lord P. Yes, yes.

Bob. I do assure you, there's no one for whom I possess a higher esteem—whose interest I have more at heart.

Lord P. It does you honour.

Bob. I got him into the service of Mr. Littleton Coke.

Lord P. Coke! what a strange coincidence.

Bob. But, to-day he has obtained the situation of groom to a Miss Rocket.

Lord P. Miss Rocket! why, that lady is now in this nouse.

Bob. Indeed! then so is Bob.

Lord P. Could I—I—see him?

Bob. Of course; permit me to ring. [*Rings bell on L. table.*] By the way, if you will excuse the idea, I can't help thinking that there is a considerable resemblance between his features and those of your son—our candidate.

Lord P. Ha! ha! what a strange notion.—[*Aside.*] Can it be so striking as to betray me?

Enter SERVANT, L.

Bob Tell Miss Rocket's new groom to step up.

[*Exit Servant, l.*]

[*Aside.*] So, Lord Charles, you roasted me once, now I'll give you a turn.

Lord P. [*Aside.*] How agitated I feel.

Enter LORD CHARLES *dressed as a groom, with his moustachios and beard cut, and his hair cropped.*

Bob. Step forward, young man—my lord, this is Bob.

Roe. [*Aside.*] My father—the devil— [*Threatens Bob.*

Lord P. [*Aside.*] I dare not look at him—

Bob. His lordship is good enough to take an interest in you, Bob—for which you will feel duly grateful—ahem—I've no doubt that he will even do something handsome for you—you see the reward of virtue:—I promised you, that by steady and persevering conduct, I should be able to give you a turn when you least expected it.

Roe. [*Aside.*] Expected it—the fellow is roasting me now with a vengeance!

Bob. Do you hear?

Roe. I—I heartily thank his lordship.

Lord P. [*Aside.*] The voice—the Pompion voice—I could swear to its haughty tones amongst a million.— [*Looks at him.*] Mercy! he will betray me. Blindness would know him to be Charles's brother.

Bob. Bob, are you ready to experience his lordship's generosity?

Lord P. Young man—I—take some—little interest in your—Robert—I— [*Checks himself.*] Mr. Crawl, you will expend this hundred pounds for Robert's benefit.

[*Gives money.*

Bob. I feel it as a gift to myself—every shilling of it shall be conscientiously spent on that individual. Bob, have you no tongue? mercy on me—no gratitude—there you stand—do you see, sir, 'tis one hundred pounds—thank his lordship.

Roe. [*Aside.*] Oh, the scoundrel!

Bob. Thank him on your knees, sir.

Roe. [*Bowing.*] Oh, you—your—lordship—I—scarcely know how to— [*Aside.*] Damn that fellow's impudence.

Lord P. Farewell, Mr. Crawl; you will let me hear of this young man from time to time. [*Takes a last look at Roebuck from the door.*] Fatal image—poor boy—Sarah Jane—oh, memory!

[*Exit, R. C.*

Roe. [*Sits across a chair and looks at Bob, after a pause.*] So, sir you have the daring impudence not only to ring me up for your special amusement, but to rob my father before my face.

Bob. Perquisites, my lord, nothing more; besides, if I am to injure my character by adopting that of a lawyer for half an hour—the least I may be spared is the lawful plunder of the profession. Consider the risk.

Enter RURAL, L. C.

Rur. I can't find him anywhere.

Roe. Mr. Rural.

Bob. The old money-lender—he has dogged us—the bailiff can't be far off—I must find my master.

[*Exit Bob, cautiously, L. C.*]

Rur. Why—surely—

Roe. [*Aside.*] He detects me—better make him a confidant, or he may betray me.—Yes—yes—he—he—you look surprised—this dress—

Rur. But where's all this? [*Touching his chin.*]

Roe. Ha! sir! my judicious compliment to the court of Versailles—hush!—I'll tell you—it's a freak—

Rur. Law!

Roe. Nothing more—[*Aside to Rural,*] you see—[*Aside.*] aid me, Mercury, god of lies.—[*Aloud.*] I told you I was assisting Coke to the hand of Miss Rocket.

Rur. You did—so am I.

Roe. They—they are off to-night.

Rur. I know it—ha!

Roe. The deuce you do—well—I'm going to ride postillion, that's all.

Rur. Going down as his groom?

Roe. No! as her's—but hush—I implore—not a syllable—could I but find Kate, without meeting my father—I have secured the servants. [*Goes up, c., and off, L.*]

Rur. Well, I had heard of young noblemen turning coachmen—but this is the first instance of one turning groom—I—

Re-enter LORD POMPION, R. C.

Lord P. They have gone, sir—the persons who were here this instant, do you know have they left the house?

Rur. You saw them?

Lord P. Certainly!

Rur. [*Aside.*] Oh! then he is in the secret.—You know
men—you are aware—

Lord P. Of what?

Rur. That Miss Rocket has got another groom.

Lord P. Y—e—s.

Rur. A new character for your rogue of a son.

Lord P. Ah! hush! [*Seizes his arm, and looks round.*]

Rur. Eh! what's the matter?

Lord P. My dear sir, you have gained, I know not by
what accident, the possession of a secret of the deepest
importance.—Yes, I confess it—the person who is now
engaged in the menial capacity you mention, is my son.

Rur. Of course, he is—he is going to, ha! ha! ride
postillion; what will he do next?

Lord P. You will conceal this secret?

Rur. If you desire it, certainly; I had suspicions that
Miss Rocket was in love with him, but—

Lord P. Miss Rocket! is it possible—my dear, dear
sir, you transport me—could you but conclude a match
between them.

Rur. Good gracious!

Lord P. [*Aside.*] Young ladies have eloped with their
rooms before now.

Rur. Why, my lord.

Lord P. I know—you would start objections, I antici-
pate them. Listen—should this desirable event take
place, it may be politic for me to show some temper, you
understand—

Rur. Certainly not.

Lord P. To be angry—but do not heed it—'twill only
be in compliment to the colonel, and to conceal my rela-
tionship—[*Crosses to L.*] Remember, there's a valuable
benefice in my gift: it is just vacant. All I can say is—
consummate my hopes, and ask me for what you will, it
shall be yours. [*Exit, L.*]

Rur. But, my lord—Lady Alice what can this mean—
an hour ago he told me that he designed Lord Charles
for Lady Hawthorn, now he would give anything to see
him married to Miss Rocket. This is all very strange—
if he agree to the match between his son and her lady-
ship, and the colonel consent to Littleton's proposals, and

the young people love each other—why make any mystery? Ha! here is my boy—he seems annoyed—a—

[Seats himself, c., and watches; L.]

Enter LITTLETON COKE, L., *he walks up and down after a pause.*

Lit. I don't think there was a fool in the house who she did not flirt with through her opera-glass. Every one noticed it—she swept over the stalls, smiling at every eager eye that was fixed on her—damme, she appears intimate with the whole subscription—and then the omnibus boxes—oh, that was awful—why, every man in 'em were round into her box—they went by two's, relieving each other every five minutes, like sentries before Whitehall. She made herself the focus for every lorgnette in the pit—and not content with that, she goes round into Lady Pompion's box, turns her back full upon the stage and me, and flirts with Tom, as if she had only six hours to live. I was obliged to groan in the middle of one of Grisi's finest arias—and nearly got turned out.

Rur. (L.) Littleton, fortune smiles on you—my dear boy, I give you joy—she is yours.

Lit. (R.) Is she?

Rur. The colonel says, his carriage and house are at your service, and that the affair ought to be settled before breakfast to-morrow.

Lit. [*Aside.*] In all this excitement I had almost forgotten my election, and the colonel—of course! Roebuck told me he was violently opposed to his politics, he will aid my return—I'll accept his offer.

Rur. His carriage will be at the door in an hour.

Lit. Then it shall bear me from this fatal scene of enchantment, and you will accompany me.

Rur. May I—oh! what, with you! [*Embracing him.*]

Lit. Forgive me, if in my moments of passion I have slighted your affection.

Rur. Slighted! let me hear any one say you slighted—my dear boy, you have been all love, and—let's go—
[*Aside.*] I'll write to Tom to follow, ha! ha!

Enter TOM COKE and LADY ALICE HAWTHORN, *with letters, laughing, L.*

Lit. Ha! they so low to outrage me even here. I'll remain.

[Retires up, R.]

Lady A. [c.—*To Littleton*] Oh! Mr. Coke, did you hear Lablache in the finale? Ha! ha!

Lit. [*Aside.*] She must have seen me leave the house in disgust before it; I felt every eye was upon me.

Lady A. Ha! ha! he was too droll to bear. I would not hear or see any thing after that—'twould be a sacrilege.

Lit. [*Aside.*] She can be amused, too!

Tom. [*Aside.*] She loves me—I felt it—I am too full of happiness to remain unforgiving: my heart has been knocking against my will all day long. I could not look at him wi'out a blush.—Brother Littleton, a word wi' you.

Littleton Coke bows aside, and advances a little—

Tom hesitates.

Lady A. [*Aside to Rural.*] Go, leave them to me.

Rur. Bless you, angel that you are—that is—that you will be—join those young hearts and gain an old man's last prayers. [*Rur. and Lady A. retire into the inner room.*

Tom. Brother, a'm not goin to reproach you, but—but—no matter what you've been—forgive and forget. Littleton, we are brothers—flesh and blood do tingle against our parting this way—you are my father's son—the child of my mother—don't look from me, brother Littleton—because there are tears in ma eyes that a'm not ashamed of—you tremble—so do I—'ave got my hand out, though you don't see it—you'll take it?

Lit. This charity seems strangely sudden—to what do I owe it?

Tom. (L.) To her.

Lit. Lady Alice!

Lady A. Well!

[*Coming down, c.*

Lit. [R.—*Aside.*] She loves him.

Lady A. I've taken a fancy to see you two shake hands: whoever begins shall be rewarded with my waist for the first polka at Rochester House to-night; do you hear, you statue? [*She goes to Littleton, who is standing, R., with his back towards his brother Tom.*] Come, give me your hand.

Lit. His hand will suffice your ladyship for the present.

Lady A. [*Aside.*] Aha! have I reduced you to submission? now I'll try on him if I have learned, by heart, the lesson he taught me an hour ago. [*Aloud to Tom.*] Will

you favour me with a moment's *tête-à-tête* with this amusing creature?

Tom. You command me.

[*Exit, c.*]

Lit. Will your ladyship excuse me?

Lady A. No—I want you—don't go, I beg.

Lit. [*Aside.*] She entreats—she repents.

[*He pauses, she draws out a letter.*]

She takes a letter from her breast—'tis to me. [*She opens it.*] No—she opens it—she reads it—[*She sighs,*] she is affected—what can it mean?

Lady A. Mr. Coke—I—I hurt my hand this evening, and am unable to write—would you have the kindness to answer, for me, this letter, and write as I tell you?

Lit. Write as!—[*Aside.*] What does she—perhaps 'tis from Tom—it is—I—

Lady A. [*Having settled the writing materials for him.*] Pray be seated. [*He sits.*] Now, will you promise me to write as I tell you?

Lit. [*Aside.*] She smiles, ah!—[*Aloud.*] I'll swear it.

Lady A. “My dear”—let's see—yes—“dear sir”—

Lit. Two adjectives?

Lady A. Ye—s! “If [*Reading letter,*] fondest hopes”—poor fellow!—“if you imagine my treatment of you to be cruel”—

Lit. [*Aside.*] Damme, if she isn't making me write a love letter to somebody; oh, that's too good!

[*Rises and throws down pen.*]

Lady A. Bad pen? don't stir, here's another. [*Offers a pen, he looks at her, and sneaks back.*] “You will forgive me, your letter now before me, so full of deep affection”—[*Reads letter,*] mad affection—ah!—“has touched me to the heart.”

Lit. If I write that, may I—

Lady A. Your promise, sir!

Lit. Go on—your ladyship is very kind—proceed.

Lady A. “Let me confess, that I am at this moment inflicting upon you a torture, which, although you deserve, I am too feeling to continue. Rather than see you suffer longer, let me own myself, for ever, your's.”

Lit. Is there any more?

Lady A. Yes, the direction.

Lit. Ha! who's the inf—gentleman?

Lady A. "To Littleton Coke, Esq."

Lit. [*Starting up.*] Myself—could you—

Lady A. Ha! ha! ha! [*Crosses to R*

Lit. That letter—

Lady A. Take it.

Lit. Blank!—ha! my own to Miss Rocket.

Lady A. Ha! ha! ha!

Lit. And you love me?

Lady A. Let me sign that letter.

Lit. Which?—a—this—oh! yes, true.

Lady A. [*Looking over it.*] Why, it's blank, too: you did not write a line, then?

Lit. Not a syllable; and for such a document I would have given my life; stop, we'll begin again.

Lady A. No, no! had you kept your promise, you would now have possessed mine to be for ever yours.

[*Goes to table, L., and sits, ready to write*

Lit. I won't occupy you long; we'll come to "I'll be for ever, your's" at once; eh! sign a new lease of life to me.

Lady A. No, leave the document for me to look over.

Lit. While suspense is making me feel like one great pulse.

Lady A. There is a prescribed time to wear mourning for a husband, and a certain time to wear reserve to a lover. I cannot throw it off so early—think how short is our acquaintance.

Lit. But how much can be done in it, by hearts like ours; you are no slave to society, nor am I.

[*Embraces her.*

Lady A. You impetuous wretch—release me.

Lit. One word, then.

Lady A. Hush!—some one.

Enter BOB, L.

Lit. Bob!

Bob. [*Aside to him.*] Sir—sir—Craft's—

Lit. Craft!

Bob. On the premises, saw him myself, and dressed like a gentleman—so he's serious, and means to have you—get out of the house.

Lit. But how?

Bob. By any way but the hall door; it's old Scriver's debt.

Lit. And it's above £20. Ruin!—in twelve hours I should have been a Member of Parliament, and free. Bob! go to the top of the staircase—watch—prevent him from coming up, by any means, tumble on him, pitch him over the banisters accidentally, any way. [*Bob goes out, L.*]

Lady A. Who is that?

Lit. A—a—my agent; he tells me that I must start for Closeborough immediately—every moment's delay is an agony to him.

Lady A. Closeborough!

Lit. Yes—the poll takes place to-morrow. I must be there to-night.

Lady A. An election without me—that's enough to unseat the candidate—and only a few miles from town, too.

Lit. 'Tis not too late—with your voice in my favour.

Lady A. Oh, if I could but escape! the Earl considers me bound to canvass for you, Charles—ha! ha! fancy me stealing a march on Pompey, turning Closeborough into a modern Pharsalia, to run away, like Cleopatra, when the battle began, and leave Pompey in the minority. Ha! ha! ha!

Lit. Not run away, only desert to the enemy.

Lady A. That's true—I'll do it—consider yourself M P. for Closeborough—ha! ha! ha! I'll be off at once.

Lit. Hark! your carriage is driving round into the stables.

Lady A. Let the horses be kept in it; I shall be ready before the earl can return.

Lit. Can you afford Mr. Rural a seat?

Lady A. With pleasure.

Lit. And me?

Lady A. Impertinent!—certainly not.

Lit. Outside?

Lady A. Don't dare to approach me, by a mile.

Lit. But you go to Ghuznee Lodge, where I am invited also.

Lady A. Then you must occupy the village inn, while I am there. Now the fellow pouts again; listen: must I not preserve my reputation intact, even from you, before

marriage, or you may call it in question with yourself after it? Send to me your dear old friend—good bye.

Lit. But stop one moment, this letter—

Lady A. Well?

Lit. 'Twas written and directed, but unsealed—

Lady A. You want my ring again—love defunct.

Lit. No, I'm alive—thus [*Kisses her hand,*] Paradise is regained. [*Exit Lady Alice, c.*] She loves me, there is not the slightest doubt on the point—I am beloved by an angel and five thousand a-year—do I remember awaking this morning?

Enter ROEBUCK, in a postillion's jacket and cap, L.

Charles!—what's this?

Roe. Old Rocket's carriage has just driven up to the door—a thought struck me—I'll use it to elope with his daughter.

Lit. Where to?

Roe. To Closeborough; I have not the courage to argue with my father, or with her's. I'll make a demonstration—I'll ask Lady Alice to accompany her; for form's sake I shall leave her at the Lodge, and to preserve the reputation I prize beyond my own. I will not compromise it by showing myself to the servants, but, without dismounting, return to the Rocket Arms, in the village.

Lit. You're five minutes too late: she's engaged to me on the same road.

Roe. To elope?

Lit. Very near—own brother to the fact.

Roe. Ha! ha! you're jealous of my speed in love—you're distanced—look, this is a suit of our family livery: I'll rattle down to Ghuznee Lodge in two hours and forty minutes.

Enter BOB, L.

Lit. [*Crosses to Bob.*] Run down to the stables, and slip a saddle on the near-horse in the Brougham fly.— [*Exit Bob, L.*] All right. Lady Alice is going down on my interest with Rural—she refused me a seat inside her carriage: damme, I'll take one outside her horse, and give Craft the slip—this is glorious—where is the livery?—in the harness-room? I know—all right.

Enter RURAL, L. C.

My dear old friend, give me your hand. [*Shakes it violently.*] You said fortune smiled upon me—a mistake—she roars—don't ask me to explain—I couldn't. There's Roebuck—ask him—he's in his senses—shall I survive it? [*Runs out, L. Rural approaches Roebuck, who is walking hastily up and down.*

Rur. Tell me, what does it mean?

Roe. It means rapture—success—madness.

Rur. Yes, I see that—but—

Roe. You—you take Lady Alice down to her carriage, and mum—do you understand?

Rur. Not quite! but never mind.

Roe. While the colonel's carriage waits below.

Rur. I know it does, for his lovely daughter—yes.

Roe. [*Aside.*] Ha! the old gentleman is deeper than I thought—he sees through our plot.—Then, my dear sir, two of the happiest dogs in London, will whirl down two of its loveliest denizens to Closeborough.

Rur. What an extraordinary preface to marriage. Had I not heard of its approval from the lips of the old gentleman, I should have considered it too wonderful to be correct.

Enter BOB, L., breathlessly.

Bob. It's all ready, sir; saddled complete.

Roe. To your conduct is confided Miss Rocket.

Bob. [*Aside.*] Oh! I thought it was an elopement my master was about.

Roe. Hush! she is here; run to her lady's maid, and get her shawl; I'll not give hesitation a chance.

Enter MISS ROCKET, L. C.

Bob. [*Looking off.*] Oh, that's the lady—well—he has my consent.

[*Exit Bob, L.*

Rur. This appears very strange.

Roe. My dearest Kate!

Kate. Charles! and in this dress!

Roe. Do not waste our precious time in wonder; I will explain it presently.

Kate. I have suspected you unworthily, wickedly, but Alice has made me ashamed of my folly; let me suffer something to gain your pardon.

Roe. I will. Your carriage waits: suffer me to fly with you.

Kate. Fly!

Roe. Only to your own house—'Twill be enough to show our tyrants that their opposition would be vain.—Bob will conduct you to your carriage.

Kate. Bob!

Roe. Ha! oh! I never. Crawl, Bob Crawl—Alice is going—

Kate. To elope—

Roe. With Coke.—[*Aside.*] Nothing convinces a woman or a judge like a precedent.

Kate. I dare not—how—to—

Roe. I will waft you both down like a zephyr. [*To Rural, who is coming down, c.*] My dear sir, join your prayers to mine—she refuses to go.

Kate. But my father?—

Rur. My dear young lady, if that's all, your father desires it—commands it—declares that the affair must be settled before breakfast to-morrow.

Kate. That's he—I must credit you.

Rur. He ordered the carriage—have no scruples—he assured me that you would not.

Kate. Can I believe my ears?

Rur. You may; it's extraordinary, but you may.

Re-enter BOB, with the shawl and bonnet, L.

Bob. Here they are, sir: only cost me a kiss and a few promises.

Kate. I'm in a dream!

Rur. So am I!

[*Rural, with Kate and Roebuck, go up stage.*

Bob. [*Aside.*] The old money-lender here, and on such a job—ah! gets his bill out of her fortune. I must make something. Excellent! a paragraph in the Morning Post Elopement in high life—Littleton Coke, Esq., with the great heiress and lovely daughter of Colonel Rocket. Bilious father—it's in time for to-morrow's impression—they'll make an express of it. Let's see, I'll ask a small per centage on the magnitude of her fortune—I'll try twenty thousand a-year. I may get five pounds, besides, 'twill civilize the creditors.

Roe. [*Coming down.*] Be assured, dearest; confide in my devoted love, and farewell. Enough—I leave her to your care; farewell, dearest—now for the saddle, and I'm off—hurra for the road! [*Exit, L.*]

Lit. [*Appearing at R., in the dress of a postillion.*] Is she ready?

Bob. Very near, sir: all right.

Lit. Make haste!

Bob. That's for you to do, sir—

Lit. True—I'll introduce the turnpikes to fourteen miles an hour. [*Exit, L.*]

Kate. I tremble—

Rur. So do I, my dear child.

Enter LADY ALICE HAWTHORN, L., dressed.

Lady A. Kate!

Kate. Alice!

Bob. [*Aside.*] Hollo! here's—

Lady A. What does this mean?

Rur. Exactly—now—we'll have it.

Kate. My meaning, I believe, is yours.

Lady A. I—I—I'm—give me a kiss, Kate; we are both a pair of fools, dear.

Rur. Well, 'tis no clearer now—my dear—he waits.

Bob. [*Aside.*] Extraordinary express—another elopement. Lord Charles Roebuck with the Lady Alice Hawthorn. Ten pounds—

Rur. 'Tis no clearer now. [*Lady Alice takes his arm.*]

Bob. This way. [*Conducts Miss Rocket, L. Rural goes up with Lady Alice, L. C.*]

Rur. I wish you—both—farewell.

Kate. [*Going with Bob, L.*] Alice, what will become of me?

Lady A. You will get married, dear.

Kate. Farewell.

Rur. I wish you happy—farewell!

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF ACT IV.

A C T V .

SCENE I.—*Ghuznee Lodge.*—*The house is a villa, with an Indian character apparently forced upon it—the lawn and shrubberies extend out, C. F., shrubberies, R. and L., with a pagoda summer-house, L. 3d E.—a broad carriage entrance leads off, L.—extreme entrance—a scentry box is discovered c., in a bush. STRIPE is discovered standing in c. at the back, directing a field-glass down the avenue—a VETERAN, in Bombay cavalry uniform, walks as if keeping guard.*

Stripe. No signs of the colonel, yet his orders were for us to be in readiness to receive him at two this morning, and here's half-past eleven—I've despatched Wilcox with the old howitzer to the top of the hill, to give us a signal; hollo! whom have we here? good light cavalry figure.

Enter LITTLETON COKE down the avenue, L.

Aid-de-camp with despatches from head-quarters, perhaps.

Lit. I've left Bob addressing the free and independent electors of Closeborough from the hustings. [*Very distant shouts, L.*] There's another shout, elicited by his rhetoric. I believe the rascal has compromised me with every opinion on the political creed; 'twas useless arguing with him—he said, 'twas no good in losing a vote for a mere promise—so, damn the fellow, if he didn't promise every thing to everybody. [*Distant shouts, R. U. E.*] Whether I am whig, tory, or radical, will puzzle the *Times* to discover.

Enter RURAL from the house, R.

Rur. (L.) My dear boy, I don't know what's the matter inside, but something has gone wrong; Lady Hawthorn won't hear a word from me.

Lit. [*Aside.*] She has discovered my disguise; no matter, she will readily forgive it.

Rur. Just now, she and Miss Rocket flew upon me; at all they could say was, "Explain, sir, explain."

Lit. And you?

Rur. I—I ran away, because, you see, explain was just the thing I couldn't do.

Lit. [*Aside.*] He is in the dark still. 'twill be safer to keep him so. My dear old friend, 'tis all a freak, a—a—

Rur. Ah! ah! come, now, you are at some of your old tricks—oh! oh! I know you are!

Lit. We have planned a surprise, by which the old colonel and the earl will find that our young hearts have outmanœuvred their old heads—but 'tis a secret.

Rur. Oh, let me into it!

Lit. When the colonel arrives, and discovers Roebuck, he may storm a little.

Rur. What for? have I not his orders that you should use his carriage?

Lit. You will never mind his temper.

Rur. Not a bit, ha! ha!

Lit. The earl may possibly be annoyed—

Rur. Annoyed!—he'll be enraged!—ha! ha!—he said he would, oho! and you—now, this is all your plot, you rogue, you know it is, isn't it?

Lit. It is—but hush! here they come—leave us.

Rur. Oh, you wild, mischievous dog—oh, just what you were, when you played me those tricks in the poultry yard; when, ha! ha! you tied a gosling to my coat tail and when I walked off, the gander was nearly the death of me—oh! ha! ha! ha! you villain!

Lit. But go, I beseech.

Rur. [*Going, returns.*] And, that fifth of November too, when—

Lit. I remember, there—

Rur. A squib in my snuff-box—oh, you little rogue, oh! bless you! oh! a squib in my snuff-box!

[*Exit behind house, R., chuckling*

Lit. And bless you, for the simplest, kindest soul alive

[*Littleton goes up, R. C.*

Enter from the house, R., LADY ALICE HAWTHORN, with a newspaper, and MISS ROCKET, followed by ROEBUCK.

Roe. But hear me.

Lady A. Not a word—here's a fine catastrophe to your clever intrigues! here's an *exposée*—I shouldn't wonder if they put the whole affair into a novel, or on the stage,

Fancy my follies published in penny numbers, with illustrations; or your blunders enjoying a run at the Haymarket. Bah!—I could laugh my life out at you both, if I wasn't mad with rage.

Lit. But my dearest—

Lady A. No, sir, you have precluded the possibility of my ever being so—

Lit. Charles, what *does* this mean?

Roe. Hang me if I know. I have only been here a few minutes, but I found them both fulminating over that *Post*.

Kate. Do you pretend ignorance, my lord?

Lady A. Listen—you precious intriguers, listen:—
[*Reads.*] “*Express.—Elopement in high life.—Enormous fortune won by a young barrister.—We understand, from the best authority, that an elopement took place last night from the opera. The imprudent pair are—Mr. Littleton Coke, of qui tam celebrity, and the great heiress, Miss Rocket—whose fortune is said to exceed 20,000l. a-year.*”

Lit. The idiots—what could have caused—

Kate. Go on.

Lady A. “*Second edition—extraordinary express—another elopement in high life. Last night, the young and eccentric Lady Alice Hawthorn, whose meteoric course through the fashionable world has been greeted with such admiration, eloped from Lord Pompion's house, with her cousin, Lord Charles Roebuck. It is stated, one of the parties rode postillion; our authority omits to mention which.*”

Lit. The dolts: by what mistake could this have happened?

Lady A. By none.

Roe. How?

Lady A. 'Tis true.

Roe. & Lit. How! true!

Kate. Quite.

Lady A. You thought to outwit me and the old people—and thus you set about it. [*To Coke.*] The lady, before whom you spurred and thrashed, sir, was Miss Rocket; [*To Roebuck,*] and the humble individual who admired your equitation for three hours, was your obliged servant.

Lit. What! and—I—Miss—and he—you—eh!

Roe Coke!

Lit. I didn't—I— [*They look at each other astonished.*

Roe. Oh! but surely this mysterious blunder is not so serious—it can be mended by—

Lady A. What, sir—when all London know that my cousin ran away with—or rather, they don't know which of us ran away with the other—ah! you wretch! and in the middle of the night, too—and—no—I must marry Charley after all! [*Crosses to Roebuck, and cries.*

Kate. And you—sir—you—

Lit. I suppose I must marry you, then, after all.

Lady A. And all your cunning to outwit the governors has just effected their purposes.

Roe. But Kate—surely—you will not, by marrying him to save your character, condemn yourself to eternal misery?

Lit. [*Crosses to Roebuck.*] Eternal what, sir? let me tell you, my lord, that this is your fault, your blunder—had I been there, I—

Roe. Mine, sir, mine!

Lit. Yes, your's.

Roe. 'Tis false, sir.

Lit. False! very well, my lord.

Roe. I repeat, sir, that—

Lit. Enough, the word suffices; but for this presence, I feel you would have substituted a stronger term, but—

[*They speak apart as they go up, R.*

Kate. My dear Alice, they are quarrelling.

Lady A. No!

Kate. They are. I've seen so many men do it—I know it in a minute—they'll fight.

Lady A. A duel, and on our account! no more is required to complete our destruction. Mr. Coke—Charles—will you listen? [*Lord Roebuck goes up.*] There's nothing so like a mad bull as a man in a rage. Charles—Mr. Coke, you shall not quarrel; you have not the excuse of a long dinner; will you hear me?

Roe. I repeat, that it was his trusting to Mr. Rural that has caused this dreadful catastrophe—and to prove it, I will find him. [*Exit into house, R.*

Lit. Rural, could it—it is. Oh, my folly and weakness! Why did I entrust so dear a confidence to him? he must exonerate me from this fatal blunder—where shall I find

him? [*Goes up, meets Stripe, who is crossing—speaks in dumb show. Stripe points L. Exit Littleton Coke, R and Stripe, L.*]

Kate. Alice, dear, what's to be done?

Lady A. They must not fight, because we can't spare either of them.

Kate. But, do you—do you think, dear, we shall have to—to—exchange them?

Lady A. I don't know, love; but it's very likely; I never was run away with before: but, I believe, people in such predicaments always do marry, dear, if they can.—
[*A distant gun.*] What's that?

Enter STRIPE, L.

Stripe. Ready, guard, the Colonel comes—that's the signal

Kate. Oh, Alice, I dare not meet him.

Lady A. And I am ashamed!

Rock. [*Outside.*] Guard—

Kate. Here, in this pagoda. Quick!

[*They enter the pagoda, R.*]

Enter COLONEL ROCKET, L., followed by TOM COKE, LORD POMPION, and LADY POMPION.

Rock. So! good! guard, turn in. [*Exeunt the men, L.*]
Stripe! [*Crosses to R.*]

Stripe. Colonel!

Rock. [*With suppressed rage.*] The reports?

Stripe. Nothing, sir, particular, till past two this morning.

Rock. And then—

Stripe. Two carriages arrived half an hour apart.

Rock. Whom did they contain?

Stripe. The first, Miss Rocket, and an old gentleman, in the last, only a lady.

Lady P. My niece! I knew that girl would come to some shocking end.

Tom. But she was alone.

Stripe. Alone!

Tom. [*Aside.*] There's a sovereign for you.

Rock. *Stripe*—dismiss. [*Stripe salutes and exit, L.—*
They all look at each other.]

Tom. [*Aside.*] I feel as if my heart was returned to my body. [*Retires up stage.*]

Lord P. Calm yourself, my dear Colonel—observe my imperturbability. Your daughter has, unfortunately, eloped with her own groom; a buzz—three days' amusing variations of the story, and it is forgotten. Perhaps you will be kind enough to tell my niece that we await her here.

Rock. As for the rascally footboy, I'll kick him into Chodah—Kate will keep, but let me only catch that old intriguer. Excuse me, your ladyship—till I've found him I'm not fit to play the host. [*Goes into the house, R.*]

Lady P. Where can Charles be?

Lord P. I heard the shouts as we passed—perhaps they are chairing him.

Lady P. Mr. Coke, favour me with your arm—the excitement has quite unnerved me.

[*Tom and Lady Pompion go up, and into the house, R.*]

Lord P. 'Tis done—they are wedded—I'm sure of it.

Enter LORD ROEBUCK, R.

Roe. Where can this old—my father!

Lord P. Charles, or is it a—

Roe. Of course, my lord, you have discovered all—if not, I am not in the vein to deceive you longer.

Lord P. What do you mean?

Roe. That to achieve the hopes of my heart, I was induced to assume the disguise in which we met last night.

Lord P. Then you were—

Roe. The groom to Miss Rocket.

Lord P. And you are—are married to her?

Roe. I—I—

Lord P. Don't speak, sir—I know—I've been duped, and by my own son. Lord Charles! what excuse—what—what—Where's that meddling old fellow? This is his doing—his work—I'll find him—and let him know the consequences of thwarting a minister of state, and a peer of the realm. [*Exit Lord Pompion into house, R.*]

Roe. And I, to show him how his folly has severed two young hearts for ever. [*Exit Roebuck into house, R.*]

Enter RURAL, at the back, R. U. E.

Rur. Bless me, what a run I've had—joy has given me

youth again, and I really did have a scamper—yes—but—
[*Staggers.*] Ah! these old limbs—these old limbs.

[*Sit's on a garden chair, c*

Re-enter LORD POMPION from house, R.

Lord P. Oh!—at last—I have found you, sir!

COLONEL ROCKET rushes down from the house, R

Rock. Aha! Here you are, are you?

Rur. Yes, my dear friends, here I am.

Rock. Let me contain myself, and respect his age and profession. Harkye, sir, are you not ashamed of yourself?

Rur. [*Aside.*] Oh, here come the reproaches.—Yes;—ha! ha!—I am—I am.

Lord P. To connive at the abduction of a young lady by her own groom.

Rur. Ha! ha!—[*Aside.*] He told me not to heed his anger—that he would assume it for policy—I won't.—[*Aloud, and in Lord Pompion's face.*] Ha! ha! ha!

Lord P. And by what authority did you marry my son, sir?

Rur. [*Aside.*] Ha! ha! ha! and he told me to do it—oh, the hypocrite.—[*Aloud.*] Ha! ha! ha!

Rock. I respect your position, sir, but—

Rur. Ha! ha! ha!

Lord P. Mr. Rural, this is indecent.

Rur. Ha! ha! ha! ha! [*Retires up, L., with Lord P*

Rock. If I remain, I shall forget myself.

Enter LADY ALICE HAWTHORN, LITTLETON COKE, MISS ROCKET, and ROEBUCK, R. U. E.

Rur. Aha! at last, they are here, my blest ones, and I am free—give me your hands. [*Crosses to Roebuck.*

Roe. When you have severed our hearts for ever?

Rur. Eh?

Kate. Oh, sir, you have destroyed the only hope of my existence.

Rur. What!

Lady A. What could have actuated you to such a deed? or did you betray us to the Earl and the Colonel, and agree to compromise us into obedience.

Rur. Bless me—Littleton—

Lit. Do not look to me for help.

Rur. I—ah—[*Aside,*] the rascal is keeping up the joke, because the old people are here.

Lady A. Exonerate yourself, sir.

Rur. Ha!

Roe. What excuse can you—

Rur. Ha! ha!

Kate. You could not have mistaken—

Rur. Ha! ha! ha!

Lit. Can you not see, sir, this is reality?

Rur. Ha! ha!—[*Chokes a laugh,*] ha!

Lit. Is my ruin a subject for your mirth?

Rur. Ha! ha! [In wonder, but continuing to laugh.]

Lady A. It is inhuman!

Rur. Ha! ha! ha!

Lit. Or have you—yes, her suspicions are true, and you have betrayed me.

Rur. Ha! ha! ha!

Lit. And over such a deed, you can laugh—farewell for ever!

[*Rural bursts into a paroxysm of hysterical and convulsive laughter, Lady Alice Hawthorn runs to Rural on one side, Miss Rocket on the other, while Roebuck and Littleton Coke walk up and down on opposite sides.*]

Lady A. Don't weep, it was no fault of your's—you would have aided our love if our foolish young hearts had not puzzled your kind old head.

Rur. He's gone! he's gone!

Lit. No, my dear friend, [*Littleton goes to Rural and embraces him,*] pardon my cruelty to you: I have slighted your affection, [*Looking at Lady A.*] and for what?

Rur. Bless my heart! but I have ruined you.

Lit. No!

Rur. I have, I know I have.—I have ruined my child my—oh, forgive me, will you, Littleton?

Lit. How shall I forgive myself; come, we will leave this place. [*Rural gets up and clings to him.*] Lady Alice one word, before I go.

Lady A. You shall not, till you have forgiven me.

Lit. Forgiven!

Kate. Charles, I do repent my cruelty.

[*Rural goes up with Littleton, Roebuck, and Miss Rocket, R., Colonel Rocket and the Earl speak, R.*

Enter TOM COKE from the house, R.

Rock. I trust, my lord, you do not suspect I had any hand in this affair?

Lord P. Let us make the best of it. I have reasons for wishing that the particulars should not be investigated.

Rock. There, Kate, I don't forgive you for outflanking your old father; but, [*Whispers,*] damme, girl, you're right, he's a dashing fellow.

[*Crosses to Kate, and goes up, c.*

Tom. May I beg a moment of your ladyship's attention?

Lady A. Certainly. [*They advance, the rest retire a little.*

Tom. A'm—a—a man of few words, and I don't think you loike me less for being honest. A've none of the ways that the gay young fellows about town cultivate to win women's hearts with—because I never in my life intended to win but one, and I meant that should be my wife's.

Lady A. I believe you.

Tom. A—ahem.—[*Aside.*] This wants more than honesty, I find. [*Pauses—at last loud and bluntly.*] A've two estates in Yorkshire—a've twenty coal pits, and an iron hole—a've—a've four thousand honest pounds a-year to spend, and a've a true English heart, very much at your ladyship's service—and a've—a've—that's all—[*A pause,*] coom—don't hesitate—be honest, as I am—say yes—or—or—no.

Lady A. Honestly—I must say—no.

Tom. Well—a—that—is—at—least—honest. Yes—it is—it is—[*He is affected,*] and [*Huskily,*] may I ask you a straightforward question?

Lady A. Yes.

Tom. Do you love another?

Lady A. I do.

Tom. That's honest, too—oh, I loike it—and—ahem, that other—

Lady A. Is your brother.

Tom. Littleton?

Lady A. Yes.

Tom. Thank you—I—that is—thank you [*She retires,*]

wi my brother—wi—very well—and—yes—I'll do't—
—will—I *oul.* [*Calls.*] Brother Littleton. [*Coke advances*
R.] You—love—a—that lady ?

Lit. Yes.

Tom. Am not surprised at it—and a suppose you know
that she loves you—she told me so—but would you, for
her sake, quit gay London ?—would you live for her only ?

Lit. I would, and will.

Tom. She's worthy of a prince's throne. Brother, oh
give her, then, an honest heart, love her as I—as she—
loves you, ahem ! [*Pauses.*] I—Littleton, here is every pa-
per you ever signed to me ; 'ave never counted them, for
they sickened me to look at. A brought them doon here
thinking to restore them to you on my—but—no matter,
turn a foolish vanity and—[*Becomes abstracted, after a*
pause, passes his hand across his eyes,]—'tis past—take
them, Littleton, take back my father's gift—no—I'll buy
no brother's birthright wi' a mess of pottage ; and besides,
it wouldn't do for you to go to your rich wife a beggar,
and—and—Littleton, I—[*Chokedly and whispering.*] God
bless you ! [*Shakes his hand.*]

Lit. Tom—brother—my friends, I—

Tom. [*Seizing his hand.*] Hush !—h—[*Points to the pa-*
per,] between ourselves, not a word, not even to minis-
ter ; such things should be sacred, as our mother's grave
—not a word. [*They go up affectionately.*]

Lord P. I'll hear no more. I disapprove of the match
—the young man is a pauper, and possesses no rank to
entitle him.

Lit. My lord !

Tom. Not quite a pauper either—my lord, since he
possesses nigh two thousand pounds a-year—and is, and
ever will be, my only heir to twice as much again.

[*Shouts without, L.*]

Enter BOB, L.

Bob. They're waiting to chair the member.

Lord P. Lord Charles—make haste !

Bob. Not at all. [*Loud shouts outside—“ Hurrah for*
Coke ! Coke !”]

Bob. Do you hear ?

Lord P. Impossible ! what's the state of the poll ?

Bob Here it is, at the close, Coke, 218, Roebuck, 2.

Lord P. I've been—[*Aside,*] stop, I may gain over the new member.—[*Aloud.*] Mr. Coke, my hasty expression—
Roe. How's this, not married yet?

Lord P. Ha! Can it be possible? then I may save him yet. Colonel, things have assumed an aspect, which—

Enter LADY POMPION from house.

Lady P. What is all this?

Bob. [*Aside to Roebuck.*] All right, my lord; [*Crosses to the Earl,*] see, settle the Earl.—[*Aloud.*] If your lordship will allow me to explain our interview last evening to the countess.

Lord P. Not a word.

Bob. The boy, Robert—

Lord P. I beseech—my dear children, may heaven bless your felicitous union.

Rur. May I unite 'em, may I? come here, [*Calls Lady Alice R., and Miss Rocket, L., takes them under his arms,*] bless your young faces, your smiles fall like sunshine on my old heart; this is a delicious moment!—[*Turns round, thereby bringing Miss Rocket to R., and Lady Alice L., pushes them towards their wrong lovers; then he turns to the audience.*] There! bless you! may heaven shower its blessings on you, as it now does on me. [*Roebuck and Littleton Coke exchange Miss Rocket and Lady Alice behind Rural's back.*] Here's a feast of joy! look at this happiness! [*Turns round to Roebuck, L., sees him embracing Miss Rocket.*] Hollo! bless me! [*Turns round, R., and sees Littleton Coke embracing Lady Alice.*] Good gracious me! ha! what, have I mistaken?—and—you—ah! I see—old heads and young hearts! well, no matter—bless you that way. [*To audience.*] I see many young hearts before me, I hope you're all in love—I do—and that I could unite you all. Well, I bequeath you to the conduct of the old heads; and to them I would say, did you ever see a little child leading an old blind man?—how can age best repay such a charity? why, by guiding the blindness of youth, which is love: this is the last debt due from an old head to a young heart.

DISPOSITION OF THE CHARACTERS AT THE FALL OF
THE CURTAIN.

TOM.	LADY P.	LORD P.	LIT.	LADY A.	RURAL.	KATE.	Roe
[R.]							L.]

THE END.

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